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ISSUE #100 • JULY 2003

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DUNGEON • COLLECTOR'S ISSUE • THE LICH-QUEEN'S BELOVED • KNIGHTS OF THE LICH-QUEEN

JULY 2003

In This Issue

Dungeon

"You never told him? Never told him what was in the letter Dumbledore left fer him? I was there! I saw Dumbledore leave it, Dursley! An' you've kept it from him all these years?"

"Kept what *from me?" said Harry eagerly.*

"STOP! I FORBID YOU!" yelled Uncle Vernon in panic.

Aunt Petunia gave a gasp of horror.

"Ah, go boil yer heads, both of yeh," said Hagrid. "Harry—yer a wizard."

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July 2003
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On the Flipside: *After we decided to create the Incursion cross-magazine event, my first question was "who could best illustrate a modern interpretation of the original* Fiend Folio *cover?" Not surprisingly, fan-favorite artist Wayne Reynolds captured it perfectly. How are you at drawing flumphs, Wayne?*—Erik Mona

And Then There Were 100

My first character was—this is quite embarrassing to admit—a hobbit. My brother was desperate for players. I was five, easily manipulated, and infatuated with *The Hobbit*. To get me to play, Marc told me I could play a hobbit (he later worked halfling into my vocabulary once I was hooked on the game), and he even gave me a magic sword named *Sting*. The absolutely most embarrassing bit? My character's name was Bilbo Baggins. We played for only a little more than a year before our books found their way into the trash after the "playing D&D is like scratching Satan's back" garbage gained momentum. (I feel like I've made up for those non-gaming years, but I'll get back to that.)

I couldn't figure out why I felt compelled to dig up this little tale until I realized that in wrapping up this issue, I found myself thinking a lot about gaming milestones. With that idea in mind, I asked folks around here for some of their favorite defining gaming moments.

Polyhedron Art Director Kyle Hunter: "In high school, I decided gaming wasn't cool. It wasn't until college that I rediscovered games and realized they could be. I started back with TSR's *Marvel Super Heroes Game, DC Heroes,* and then the Mayfair *Star Wars* game."

For some, it's a decision that playing isn't enough. *Dragon* Senior Editor Matt Sernett decided in junior high that he wanted to get into RPG design: "In junior high, I was at a friend's house and he was lamenting that it would be impossible to design stuff for D&D, and I just thought, 'Why *not* me?'" In high school, Matt realized the best course to realize his (insane) dream would be to become an editor . . . and he set his sights on *Dragon Magazine*.

Not much else compares with the first time you play. *Dragon* Editor-in-Chief Jesse Decker says, "The first module I read, ran, and played through was B2: *Keep on the Borderlands*. It's bad—it's so bad—but it's great. I've already played a 3rd Edition version of that module once, but if someone decided to run it again, I'd be there."

Star Wars Insider Editor-in-Chief Dave Gross remembers his realization that "All DMs are unjust." He remembers ruining a DM's carefully drawn map. After the retributive slaughter of his character, Dave switched almost full time to DMing duties. In his words, "If there was going to be a tyrant, at least it was going to be me."

Undefeated Editor Mike Mikaelian's moment was the realization that he spent more time buying books and trying to figure out how games worked than actually playing.

And *Polyhedron* Editor Erik Mona reminisces, "The third RPGA game I ever played in was the first time I felt that I played with players who took the game as seriously as I did. They spoke with different voices and played in character all the time."

Dungeon Art Director Sean Glenn remembers running the Forgotten Realms module *Under Illefarn* for the first time right before 2nd Edition. What made it special? "Everyone was interested. It was the first time I had a group of players interested in roleplaying as well as rolling dice."

I'd like to think that the last few years have given me a chance to make up for lost gaming time. In working on this issue, I think I've also made up for missed gaming memories. I've made a milestone for myself here, with what I believe is one of *Dungeon's* best issues. And I hope that for you faithful readers, something in this issue becomes a milestone in your gaming career. I hope that years from now, when you're making your 6th Edition characters, eating pizza, and drinking Mountain Dew, you'll say, "Remember *Dungeon* #100? I remember fighting the Lich-Queen—man, that was a blast!"

I don't know where we'll go from here, to be honest. *Dungeon* has seen more change in the past two years than it has in the rest of its history. We've joined *Polyhedron* at the spine; introduced Critical Threats, a new Adventure Path, and now Agents and Allies; gone from bi-monthly to monthly; and switched publishers.

One thing hasn't changed, though: We're still committed to being the best source of adventure material in gaming. With that, welcome to this, the 100th issue of *Dungeon Magazine*. Enjoy your stay. Now go create some milestones of your own.

Dungeon

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HELPFUL NPCS, WOULD-BE COHORTS, AND UNIQUE SIDEKICKS

AGENTS AND ALLIES

BY MONTE COOK
ARTWORK BY TOM FOWLER

Derthan Kaderas, Male Dwarf Ftr7/Sor2: CR 9; Medium Humanoid (dwarf); HD 7d10+21 plus 2d4+6; hp 75; Init +6; Spd 20 ft.; AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 12; BAB/Grap +8/+11; Atk +13 melee (1d8+7, *+1 longsword*); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d8+7/19–20, *+1 longsword*) or +10/+5 ranged; SQ dwarf traits; AL CN; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 17, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 6, Cha 14.

Skills: Appraise +4 (+6 with stone or metal), Bluff +5, Climb +9, Concentration +5, Craft (alchemy) +3, Craft (metalworking) +12, Hide +4, Jump +8, Move Silently +4, Ride +7, Spellcraft +5. *Feats:* Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Point Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword).

Possessions: +1 longsword, two daggers, *ring of protection +1, amulet of natural armor +1, necklace of fireballs (Type II), wand of Melf's acid arrow* (27 charges), *potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of levitate, potion of nondetection,* 13 gp, 9 sp.

Spells Known (6/5; base save DC = 12 + spell level): 0th—*dancing lights, detect magic, mage hand, ray of frost, read magic;* 1st—*mage armor, shield*.

Required Leadership Score: 13

Preferred Leader Class: Bard, fighter, rogue, sorcerer

Preferred Leader Alignment: CN, N (also CE, NE)

DERTHAN KADERAS

Derthan's main fault is that he was always too smart for his own good. Born with what his parents called the "taint of magic," he clearly had an inborn talent for spellcasting—not terribly common among dwarves, and certainly among the Kaderas clan, not at all desirable. Looked down upon by his peers, even though he excelled at normal dwarven activities, he grew into a spiteful adult; he never made an effort to fit in. Derthan thought that his differences made him better than everyone else. His angry but intelligent demeanor both precipitated and ended his short marriage. He was thoughtful and ingenious in ways that many dwarves were not, but he also was quick to judge others harshly and far too free with unkind words.

He left his home after the heinous murder of another dwarf. The Kaderas clan continues to search for him to this day. Derthan found his way to a cosmopolitan city and settled down there. Meeting new types of people has broadened his horizons and even softened his demeanor a bit. No longer a sociopath, he now regrets his past crimes and is trying to reform—but it's an uphill battle to change when all you've known is hate and resentment.

Now a fixture in the city, he earns some gold as a con man, and occasionally as a bodyguard or enforcer. He'd rather not kill anyone, and he's no longer cruel, but he does whatever it takes to defend himself.

TACTICS

Using his spells almost solely for defense, Derthan usually has *mage armor* cast (giving him AC 18), and the first thing he does when danger rears its head is cast *shield* (for a total AC of 22). He loves convincing his foes that he is nothing but a wizard before wading into melee with his sword (with which he is quite deadly). Conversely, he could pretend to be just a fighter caught without his armor in town, confusing foes with his invisible, potent defenses. In any event, Derthan doesn't like people to know his secrets. Sometimes, he leads with attacks from his wand while other times he hides it in a boot as a sudden surprise.

In a fight Derthan puts survival first. He's not fast, however, so he always tries to plan a unique method of escape. His *potion of levitation* is for just such an emergency. He hopes to one day get hold of some item that can grant him invisibility (or learn the spell) to use for the same purpose.

DEVELOPMENT

Derthan is a likely patron at a tavern the PCs frequent, or a customer at a shop they visit. He's not necessarily looking for trouble, but he does frequently make some gold by conning the unwary—selling useless junk as "dwarven artifacts," selling worthless treasure maps, or simply pretending to know more than he does about a topic of interest in order to get some bribe money. He gives various contacts—bartenders, for example—a small cut if they send "rubes" his way.

The dwarf is also likely to fall in with the wrong crowd. A capable fighter, he makes a good bodyguard and is often hired as such for criminals in need of protection. The PCs might encounter him in this role. While Derthan is not bloodthirsty, he uses his various skills and tricks to perform his duties effectively.

Derthan is a great figure to use as a "more than he appears" kind of encounter. He could turn into a useful ally, if a charismatic PC can turn him away from his dishonest ways, or even become the cohort of a less scrupulous character. Ω

CRITICAL THREATS

BY RICHARD BAKER
ARTWORK BY TOM FOWLER

MASTER THEST

Cynical and hedonistic, Homnar Thest seems to be a prosperous merchant and caravan master who spares no expense to provide himself with the finest things in life—well-made clothing, good wine, fine service, and enormous quantities of rich viands. While Master Thest's avarice and gluttony are plain for all to see, Homnar possesses some peculiarly horrible appetites that he prefers to keep secret. He is actually a weretoad, and he takes particular pleasure in devouring humans and humanoids of all sorts whenever he gets the chance.

Homnar Thest is a grotesque figure. He is quite fat, with a large, round head perched on a neck seemingly as thick and round as a fur collar. His mouth is quite wide, and his eyes are small and beady. Despite the heaviness of his torso, his limbs are long and spindly, and he moves with far more grace and quickness than one would expect of a person his size. His animal form is a Large dire toad. Like all lycanthropes, Homnar Thest can also assume a hybrid form, but he rarely does so, preferring to gulp down his human prey whole in toad form.

Homnar Thest, Advanced Dire Weretoad Human Rog6: CR 10; Medium Humanoid (human, shapechanger); HD 6d6+6 plus 8d8+43; hp 106; Init +7; Spd 30 ft. (6 squares); AC 22, touch 15, flat-footed 22; BAB +10/+5; Grap +12; Atk +15 melee (1d6+4/18–20, *+2 rapier*) or +14 ranged (1d6+2/×3, masterwork composite shortbow [+2 Str]); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d6+4/18–20, *+2 rapier*) and +12 melee (1d4+1/19–20, masterwork dagger), or +14/+9 ranged (1d6+2/×3, masterwork composite shortbow [+2 Str]); SA alternate form, sneak attack +3d6; SQ evasion, low-light vision, lycanthropic empathy, scent, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +14, Will +11; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Bluff +8, Disable Device +10, Hide +22, Jump +16, Listen +20, Move Silently +12, Open Lock +12, Search +10, Sense Motive +10, Spot +20, Tumble +12. *Feats:* Dodge, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility, Toughness, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse.

Dire Toad Form: As human form, except: Large Humanoid (human, shapechanger); Init +8; AC 22, touch 15, flat-footed 22; BAB +10; Grap +20; Atk +15 melee (1d6+9 plus poison, bite) or +13 ranged (none, tongue); Full Atk +15 melee (1d6+9 plus poison, bite) or +13 ranged (none, tongue); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft. (15 ft. with tongue); SA alternate form, curse of lycanthropy, improved grab, poison, sneak attack +3d6, swallow whole; SQ damage reduction 10/silver, evasion, low-light vision, lycanthropic empathy, scent, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; SV Fort +15, Ref +15, Will +11; Str 22, Dex 18, Con 20, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: As human form, except: Hide +19, Jump +20, Move Silently +13, Open Lock +13, Tumble +13.

Hybrid Form: As human form, except: Large Humanoid (human, shapechanger); Init +8; AC 22, touch 15, flat-footed 22; BAB +10/+5; Grap +20; Atk +15 melee (1d8+6, bite); Full Atk +15 melee (1d8+6, bite) and +11/+11 melee (1d6+3, 2 claws); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA alternate form, curse of lycanthropy, sneak attack +3d6; SQ damage reduction 10/silver, evasion, low-light vision, lycanthropic empathy, scent, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; SV Fort +15, Ref +15, Will +11; Str 22, Dex 18, Con 20, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: As human form, except: Hide +19, Jump +20, Move Silently +13, Open Lock +13, Tumble +13.

Alternate Form (Su): Homnar can shift into toad or hybrid form as if using *polymorph* on himself, although his gear is not affected and he does not regain hit points for changing form. Changing to or from animal or hybrid form is a standard action.

Curse of Lycanthropy (Su): Any humanoid or giant hit by Homnar's bite attack in animal or hybrid form must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 15) or contract lycanthropy.

Improved Grab (Ex): Dire toad form only. To use this ability, Homnar must hit an opponent with his bite or tongue attack.

TACTICS

Homnar Thest is a predator. He seeks out opportunities to waylay lone travelers or creep into the rooms of solitary inn guests. He is quite stealthy, even in toad form, and naturally retains his sneak attack and other rogue abilities while in his dire toad shape. He avoids fights with large groups of people, preferring to use his improved grab to seize a single opponent

Lycanthropic Empathy (Ex): Homnar gains a +4 racial bonus on checks made to influence toads and dire toads, and can communicate simple concepts (such as "friend," "foe," or "attack" if the animal is friendly.

Poison (Ex): Dire toad form only. Bite; Fortitude DC 19; damage 1d6 Con/1d6 Con.

Swallow Whole (Ex): Dire toad form only. Homnar can swallow a grappled opponent of Medium size or smaller by making a successful grapple check. Once inside, the opponent takes 1d6 points of bludgeoning damage plus 1d4 points of acid damage per round. A successful grapple check allows the swallowed opponent to climb out of the stomach and return to Homnar's maw. Another successful grapple check is required to get free. A swallowed creature can try to cut its way out with a light piercing or slashing weapon. Dealing at least 10 points of damage to the gizzard (AC 13) creates an opening large enough to permit escape. Once a single swallowed creature exits, muscular action closes the hole. Homnar's stomach can hold 2 Medium or 8 Small or smaller opponents.

Possessions: +2 studded leather armor, +2 rapier, masterwork dagger, masterwork composite shortbow [+2 Str] with 10 *+2 arrows* and 10 silver arrows, *ring of protection +2*, 2 potions of cure moderate wounds, 1 potion of fly*. *Homnar normally wears his ring in hybrid or animal form.

and swallow the unfortunate soul whole, quickly leaving the scene of the attack once he's made his kill.

If forced to fight, Homnar is not above grabbing and swallowing a weak-looking enemy for no other reason than to reduce the number of antagonists he faces. However, Homnar would prefer not to fight a pitched battle against armed and armored adventurers. Given the chance, he'd rather flee a fight with the intention of returning later to attack his enemies in the dark hours of the night.

DEVELOPMENT

Homnar could be the featured killer in a "whodunit" adventure. The PCs find themselves sharing an inn with Homnar and a small number of other travelers on a cold and rainy night, but over the course of the evening, the other guests begin disappearing. Master Thest, of course, points out that since no bodies have been found, foul play is not very likely. After all, the missing people might have been lured out into the night by some sinister force, if they didn't choose to leave of their own accord.

Master Thest has hired a number of weaker weretoad rogues and organized them into a group of smugglers and slavers. The weretoads snag victims and goods in dire toad form, swallow them, then take them out of a major city in their own bellies. The kidnap victims that don't survive become the toads' next meals; those that do are hardy enough to command a hefty price in the slave market. Tired of losing so many slaves to his underlings' bellies, Master Thest has begun looking for a spellcaster capable of protecting his kidnap victims from the acid in the toads' stomachs. His unique qualifications for this job have attracted the attention of several local organizations (the thieves' guild or a college of wizards are likely to become suspicious) that have turned to the PCs to discover what's happening. Ω

DRAGON #310: WARRIOR CLASSES

DM Screen: That's right—next issue includes a complete DM screen. This exclusive 4-panel screen is fully compatible with the Revised 3rd Edition Dungeons & Dragons game.

Barbarians: Master the changes to the 3.5 barbarian with intriguing class combos, alternate rage abilities, barbarian-only feats, and other innovative options. In addition to these intriguing new game mechanics, the article features advice for playing barbarian characters that are sure to fuel your inner rage.

Fighters: The most versatile weapon masters in the D&D game get even more options with new customized versions of the fighter class.

Monks: The Monk class in the *Player's Handbook* represents only one of the many fighting styles open to players. A new, customizable version of the class opens up new fighting techniques and new roleplaying opportunities.

Rangers: These options and class combos explore the versatility of the revised ranger and give you more ways to build interesting ranger characters.

Rogues: Alternate sneak attack abilities, customizable rogue options, and intriguing roleplaying advice.

Plus: Mike Stackpole Fiction, Player Advice, Dungeoncraft, Dork Tower, Nodwick, What's New, Zogonia.

DUNGEON #101 POLYHEDRON #160

Prison of the Firebringer By Richard Baker: An ancient slaad lord has waited for his freedom for centuries, and members of a new cult have dedicated themselves to freeing the powerful creature and allowing it to unleash its fury on the land. A D&D Forgotten Realms adventure for 13th-level PCs.

Special *Dungeon* Subscriber Section: The Chasm Bridge By Desmond P. Varady and Revised by Chris Thomasson: This module originally appeared as a special section in *Dragon Magazine* #131. Now updated for Revised 3rd Edition, your players can relive this great adventure. A wizard living in the Underdark seeks to extort tolls from travelers seeking passage through his territory. The PCs must deal with the greedy spellcaster and stop his tyranny if they wish to pass. A D&D adventure for 6th-level PCs.

Polyhedron #160 **Iron Lords of Jupiter:** A d20 Modern Mini-Game of Planetary Adventure By Lizard:

"*I had considered myself prepared for anything. I had one degree in Engineering and another in Astrophysics. I had completed my emergency training with honors, and I could disassemble and reassemble any one of Minerva's systems blindfolded, or so I liked to think. Yet, in the end, the reason I am alive today is that I allowed myself the indulgence of keeping my hobby of fencing.*"

Personal journal of Alicia Vanderveck, October 10, 2092

100 issues of Dungeon Magazine

Dungeon has been carried, nurtured, and beaten into submission by a number of talented editors over the years. Roger founded the magazine, Barbara shepherded it through half its issues (Holy Wow!), and Chris (the Canadian one) went from most prolific contributor to seeing his name atop *Dungeon's* masthead. The thing that strikes me the most powerfully looking through these old issues, though, is that all these people were more than editors of the magazine—they were fans of the game.

I wanted to see just where the magazine had been—maybe to get an idea of where it's going, but also out of a certain curiosity generated by my own D&D geekiness and the job title we've all held at one point in our lives—so I contacted as many of the past editors of *Dungeon* as I could find. What follows is a take on important moments in the magazine's history and more than a few key impressions many of those editors took away with them from their time spent here.

We've moved from Wisconsin to Washington, from TSR to Wizards of the Coast to Paizo Publishing, but one thing hasn't changed: The adventure still continues, and few can claim to do it better.

Chris Thomasson

Roger Moore: In the beginning ...

...there was a dragon that wanted a dungeon.

It was 1986, and I had been with the TSR Periodicals staff for three years, working on *Dragon Magazine* as an associate editor, when work to create a new games magazine at TSR, Inc. began in earnest. The possibility of starting a magazine strictly for AD&D and D&D game adventures had long been discussed as a means of reducing the creative burden for the Games division, which was feeling overwhelmed with its workload. We also heard calls from gamers for shorter adventures, and a magazine that offered three to six adventures per issue would be a godsend to all.

The editor for *Dragon Magazine* abruptly left the company as work progressed, and I took over Periodicals and became editor for both *Dragon Magazine* and the newly named *Dungeon Adventures*. The first issue came out for September/October 1986, with cover art by the renown Keith Parkinson and a short adventure by Patricia Nead Elrod, later famous for her vampire novels. It was an instant success, and subscriptions poured in.

The first year's adventures were striking, indeed. Freelance writers submitted most of the work, and the results were imaginative. Heroes could venture into a ruined tower in search of a world-destroying book; venture undersea to save kidnap victims; walk through a titan's dream; struggle through an insane, non-Euclidean dungeon that defeats all attempts to map it; and fight a dragon that puts entire sailing ships in its treasure hoard. Artwork was first-rate, supplied by the likes of Daniel Horne, Clyde Caldwell, Robin Wood, and Jim Holloway. Our staff was blessed with gifted workers who cared about the readers as well as the final product.

The tradition came into being of offering a brief biography of each writer at the start of his or her adventure, a bit of fame that has started many designers on the road to better things. The tradition also began of supplying a little quote from fantasy literature for each issue's table of contents page. This was a creation of my own, a way of nudging fantasy gamers into becoming fantasy readers as well.

Handling two magazines at once was too much of a strain for me, however. I vaguely recall laying out an issue of *Dungeon* on Christmas Eve, wondering what I was doing at work when everyone else had gone home. I spoke with the publisher in January, and we soon hired the remarkable Barbara Young as an assistant editor. She took over nearly all editorial duties before issue #9 (January/February 1988), when she was named as a full editor, and the magazine prospered.

Barbara Young: The Marathon

I have a secret to confess. When I was the editor of *Dungeon*, one of the few parts of the job I really disliked was writing the monthly editorial. So when Chris Thomasson asked me for "500–750 words on your time working on the magazine," I flashed back to all those deadline weeks when I couldn't think of anything to say. In those days, I often cajoled one of the other *Dungeon* staffers into writing

the editorial (thanks, Wolfgang!). And when that didn't work, on at least one occasion I got one of our authors to write it.

Well, I can't pull that off now, so I've uncrated all my carefully preserved issues of *Dungeon* for inspiration. Looking through them is like looking at a kaleidoscope of eight years of my life, years that went by too quickly. It was the best job I ever had because of the people I worked with. We became like family. Although I was nominally in charge of the magazine, all of the magazine staff worked as a team. I relied on Wolfgang Baur's intimate knowledge of the rules, Larry Smith's artistic sense, Dale Donovan's humor, and Roger Moore's support.

When Roger called me in 1987 to offer me a job on *Dungeon Adventures,* TSR's newest magazine, I was skeptical. If anyone other than Roger had asked, I think I might have passed. But I took the job, knowing that startup magazines had high failure rates. Not this one, though. I'm happy to receive each issue of *Dungeon* and know that it is still going strong.

In looking through the 50 issues I worked on, what strikes me is how much of a dialog the magazine staff had with its readers. We received lots of letters, read them all, and responded to many in the pages of the magazine. We conducted polls, asking about what the readers wanted to see. We tried new things. Some ideas worked (Side Treks debuted in issue #26). Some didn't. (I believe we printed only one "no DM required" adventure.) But we managed to keep this dialog going before email. By issue #8, we'd established an online presence (in GEnie's Gamer's Forum). But we didn't have a real email address until issue #48 (July/August 1994). Even then, we received only a few email messages a week.

Wolfgang Baur had been one of our more prolific freelance authors, writing adventures by himself and with Steve Kurtz. In the fall of 1991, I was talking on the phone to Steve about an adventure, and he mentioned that Wolf had packed up all his earthly belongings in an aged van and was driving to the Chicago area to look for a job. "Tell him to get in touch with us!" Roger and I chorused. I don't remember what kind of job Wolf was looking for, but we effectively derailed him from whatever career he was heading toward by inviting him up to Lake Geneva to "meet us and have lunch." We'd already agreed that, if he had no more than the requisite number of heads and didn't slobber too badly, we were going to offer him the job of assistant editor. We were stunned at what a nice, normal fellow Wolf turned out to be. (You can read his assessment of the rest of the staff in *Dungeon* #33.) When I moved on to become managing editor of TSR's book department, I was happy to leave the magazine in Wolf's capable hands.

In *Dungeon* issue #50 I wrote, "I'm looking forward to issue #100. Who knows what milestones we'll all have passed by the time March 2004 rolls around." (Well, okay, so I'm not so good with math.) I had no idea that issue would arrive so soon, but I'm happy to again participate in the ongoing *Dungeon* adventure.

Wolfgang Baur: The Glories of Slush

Many writers and editors dread the slush pile, that source of unsolicited manuscripts and well-intentioned efforts by young or beginning writers out to break into print. I had the opposite relationship with it during my time at *Dungeon:* As far as I'm concerned, all good things come from the slush pile. It's where I started with the magazines—that is, I was in the slush pile as a writer. Years later, when I was editing *Dungeon,* the slush pile was always the most surprising place to be.

During my high school and college years, I sent queries and submissions to the magazine. To my surprise, I got letters and contracts back, and eventually a certain level of beer money. This was great! They were paying me for something I loved to do. Plus I earned bragging rights, and got the thrill of seeing my name in print. It was almost too easy—I was writing adventures for my own campaign anyway, so I sort of assumed that the magazines needed the help, because if they were accepting my submissions, the slush pile couldn't be that big. Basically, I had no idea what a mountain of paper the slush pile really was.

When I heard they were hiring at TSR, Steven

Kurtz put me onto the trail. "You've written for them, so they'll interview you. Go for it," he said. And what do you know, they were happy to train someone who they knew could write decently. In a sense, the slush pile got me hired.

Once I'd arrived, I figured I had it made. But it was right back to the slush pile, this time from the other side. It was my job to screen everyone else's work and pass the best parts to Roger and Barbara. Most days, this editorial chore was a huge ego boost ("Hey, my stuff is better than this!").

After a while, you got a bit of a sixth sense about submissions. The ones with rambling, unfocused cover letters usually went back with a form rejection—the text wasn't any better than the letter. Other letters included touching testimonials ("My mom and my gaming group really like it!"). A few queries claimed to have great ideas, but asked for help writing the actual text (sorry, that's why we're the editors). And once in a while, someone would write something worth consideration: a good idea badly executed, or a bad idea written brilliantly. They were always set aside, though often with an encouraging letter to the writer to try again. The ones that were almost right, but would require weeks of developmental editing to bring into shape, were the heartbreakers.

Fortunately, the illiterates and the heartbreakers weren't the only submissions. I very clearly remember one Canadian fellow who drew great maps. I thought, "If he writes as well as he draws, I'm sold!" I had just found Christopher Perkins's first manuscript, and it stood out like a torch in the dark.

Later still, I stopped reading the slush pile, and depended on others to bring me its goodies. This certainly cut down on the pain involved in confronting Our Failing Educational System directly, but it made the choices tougher. Mostly, I weighed whether a new kid from the slush pile could measure up to the regulars in the magazine: Willy Walsh, James Jacobs, Christopher Perkins, all the folks whose work appeared in print at least three times a year.

These days, I suspect that the slush pile is really someone's overstuffed inbox, packed with email queries. I know that's a better way to go than self-addressed, stamped envelopes. But I like to think that someone at Paizo is sitting in front of a mountain of paper, hoping for just one good one to show the boss.

Dave Gross: Mappers: An Appreciation of Dungeon

There's a reason they call the magazine *Dungeon*, and no, it's not all the personal ads mistakenly submitted by sweaty little guys hoping to meet a lash-wielding lady in stiletto heels. Of course, considering the recent covers, you could be forgiven for that mistake.

Some gamers, including another former editor, believe the key to a great adventure is the villain, and that's a strong argument. Others think it's a compelling story. Okay. Still others say it's the great rewards for which the heroes fight, and sure, who wouldn't want those? Still, these are the elements, along with character and place names, that DMs are most likely to change. Yet what's the one thing a good module provides that most DMs are least likely to create yet need most desperately?

Why, the dungeon, of course. The map.

By "map" I mean not just the floor plan, but everything connected to it—all the information keyed with mysterious runes like 24.b.3. That marvelous blueprint saves DMs hours of work.

Some people are rather loudly proud that they don't read *Dungeon*. While the effort these dedicated individuals put into their own campaigns is admirable, some of these smug bastards scorn the "canned" adventure and boast of their own, superior creativity. That they don't actually *publish* their brilliant work is only because their art is too pure to be sullied by mass consumption or, worse yet, we wouldn't appreciate them. At least, that's what they'd *like* us to think.

The truth is, their maps are weak.

I mean, sure, they've got some wonderful drawings on graph paper—and sketching those is pretty fun, I'll be the first to admit—but there's little or nothing attached to those rooms. Where's the trap description for 18.h? I want my stat blocks! Give me the cute little treasure icon and some cool artwork, dammit!

To be fair, I should point out that a few hearty souls actually *do* create the whole map, complete with the rules needed for each area—but the best of those *do* end up in the pages of DUNGEON, for all DMs to share. It's a good thing for the rest of us, since these maps give us the time to do things like walk the dog, go to a movie, and maybe kiss somebody pretty now and then.

Fortunately for the future of D&D, it seems like more and more people are discovering this wonderful resource. Sure, a few chuckleheads still scoff at the "canned" adventures, but with all the time they spend on their creations, they're the ones least likely to breed, and they'll die out within another generation or so. So fear not, gentle DM; if you're reading these pages, you'll have all the spare time you need to seek out that special someone in stiletto heels.

Christopher Perkins: Falling Down

What can I say about my illustrious predecessors? Roger discovered me. Barbara educated me. Wolf humored me. Dave challenged me. Michelle spoiled me. By the time I took over, the magazine had found its loyal followers, so my smartest contribution was not mucking with the good things my predecessors had done.

When I first arrived from the Great White North, I thought it would be harmless fun to browse through the folders of past correspondence, in particular the Chris Perkins files. I started reading the editorial staff's comments scrawled in the margins of my proposals and manuscripts, quickly realizing how one stroke of a red pen can pop a person's ego like a balloon. Here are my favorites:

Roger: "Overwritten. Return for slow, not-too-hasty rewrite."

Barbara: "Nothing about this jumps out and screams 'Take me!'"

Wolf: "Pyramids and minions of Set are trite, even by forgiving standards."

Dave: "The villain lacks personality. He's just *evil*. Bleh."

Michelle: "Argh. Is this a Canadian thing?"

With little ego left to bruise, I present to you the Top 10 Chris Perkins Adventures you'll never see in print, as determined by Those Who Went Before:

10. "Cutters." This PLANESCAPE adventure was the RPGA Open tournament at GEN CON one year. At a modest 180,000 words, it would have filled more than two issues. Turns out Dave liked PLANESCAPE, but not that much.

9. "Quill or be Quilled." A wizard hires the heroes to steal another wizard's magic quill. I should have been skinned for the title alone, never mind the plot.

8. "The Verdantshire Snatcher." A charming tale about a girl and her "imaginary" friend—a friendly ogre named Grundelspuf. When the girl wanders off with "Spuf," local townsfolk believe she's been kidnapped by the monster. (Pitched to Michelle first, then to Disney. Both took a pass.)

7. "Dwarvenbane." The heroes are bounty hunters looking for dwarf fugitives. The dwarves hide in a tower and are killed by its nefarious owner—a wizard! (What a surprise.) Barbara needed all her fingers and toes to count the plot holes in this one.

6. "Ankh of the Ancients." Aforementioned pyramid and minions of Set highlight this tedious dungeon crawl to find a lost artifact. Trite, indeed.

5. "Woodenhead." Think "homicidal Pinnochio in Ravenloft" and you'll get the gist. Roger liked it. Barbara entertained it. Wolf shot it in the head.

4. "Shreds of Sanity." The main villain was a wolfwere who played the bagpipes. Wolf was not smitten. Dave called it "Shreds of Dignity."

3. "The Troublesome Toymaker." Petite constructs run amok. Three guesses who's to blame? I couldn't sell this dud to Barbara or Wolf—and don't think I didn't try.

2. "The Quill, the Quest, and the Quagmire." Pitching a trilogy of "Q" adventures was really arrogant, particularly given that the third adventure hinged on the PCs delivering a birthday present to a wizard in a swamp. To quote Barbara: "No, no, and . . . no."

1. "Kelvin Wickerclock's Whimsical Adventure." The heroes follow a gnome time traveler through a portal and encounter Tex "Tombstone" Cully (a rootin', tootin', six-shootin' buckaroo), gangsters, ninja assassins, and Zack "The Hack" Moriarty (a B-movie film director), not to mention—I kid you not—a pygmy hunting party and a WWI flying ace named Griffon. I must've been *really, really* bored that day.

Fortunately for DUNGEON's readers, the editors have always done a great job picking the diamonds out of the slush. Chris Thomasson is no exception. Unlike the rest of us, however, he *likes* wading through slush. He likes it a *lot*. If you're a writer, don't be afraid to send him some. Ω

The epic Incursion triptych painted by Wayne Reynolds.

OLD EMBERS NEVER DIE

BY ANDY COLLINS

ARTWORK BY MARK NELSON, ANDREW HOU, AND ARNOLD TSANG · CARTOGRAPHY BY PETER WHITLEY

"Old Embers Never Die" is a two-part D&D adventure designed for four 12th-level PCs. Characters who survive the entire adventure should approach or advance to 13th level. DMs can modify the adventure for parties beyond this range of level (and size) by increasing or decreasing the number of enemies present, as noted in the "Scaling the Adventure" sidebar.

This adventure previews some material from the *Draconomicon*, although that book is not necessary to play.

BACKGROUND

As an adult red dragon, Flame wisely entrusted a githyanki wizard with a small chunk of his flesh, to be used to clone him should he meet an untimely end. Over the years, the wizard forgot his promise and lost track of time—as is wont to occur in the timeless void of the Astral Plane—and lost contact with Flame. The dragon grew older and more powerful, but even this power couldn't prevent him from dying (twice) at the hands of treasure-hungry adventurers. Although Tiamat herself returned him to life after his first death, Flame's second demise seemed far more permanent, as his only hope of return lay preserved in an astral fortress.

In the meantime, a squad of azers found the ruins of Flame's last lair floating in the Elemental Plane of Fire. Investigating, they discovered the intact skeleton of the dragon, along with fragmentary skeletons of dozens of kobolds. Not sure what to make of the discovery, they towed the crystal fortress back to their city to report their findings. Months later, during negotiations between an azer noble and a tribe of kobolds that had discovered a vein of diamonds, the azer casually mentioned the discovery. To the noble's surprise, the kobolds offered the azer complete access to the diamonds in exchange for the skeleton, for one of these very kobolds was among the few survivors of the band of "kamikaze kobolds" that had served Flame in the citadel before adventurers destroyed both it and the dragon.

Now the leader of a small but powerful dragon cult, the kobold priest took the skeleton and a number of his most devoted followers and traveled deep into the swamp, far away from prying eyes. There, the kobold spent long months of prayer and study until her dreams became true, and the skeletal form of Flame became an animated skeleton. Within weeks, the kobolds had built a shrine around the skeleton, hollowing out a complex of caverns beneath the swamp.

Some period of time later, the githyanki wizard came across the jar holding the last existing remnant of Flame's body. After ascertaining that the dragon was indeed dead, the wizard carried out the arcane process of duplicating the dragon's body. Suddenly, Flame was alive again in the body of a healthy adult red dragon. Any memories of his previous defeats were long lost to him (although a nagging distaste for diamonds lingered in his subconscious)—for all he knew, he had lived a long and prosperous life, dying only after amassing a treasure horde of mythic proportions. For his part, the wizard made no attempt to dissuade Flame from these beliefs, simply encouraging him to return to the Prime Material Plane and live life as a dragon should.

Flame took the githyanki's advice and spent weeks searching for a new lair. Somehow, his travels brought him to the Western Mountains, an area familiar to him in his previous life. Whether Flame was guided by some subliminal memory or sheer happenstance can only be guessed, but he found the crater lake to his liking. The area was not empty of life, however—a band of fire giants had settled in Flame's old lair. After slaying the band's leader, Flame took the remaining giants under his wing (even fathering a half-dragon child with a comely fire giant maiden). So far, he has kept his presence in the mountains a secret, although he looks forward to the day when he will lead a war party against the human forts at either end of the pass.

Today, then, two creatures called Flame exist: a skeletal dragon worshiped by kobolds and another in the prime of his life, ruling a group of fire giants in the lair he created many years ago.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The PCs follow the trail of some particularly competent kobold thieves to the lair of a dragon cult deep in the swamp. There, they discover efforts underway to grant sentience to the skeleton of a powerful red dragon once named Flame.

The second part of the adventure may follow closely on the heels of the first, or it might occur some time later, depending

on how energetically the heroes pursue the leads discovered in the kobold lair. Eventually, however, the PCs determine that trouble has returned to the Western Mountains in the form of a band of fire giants. Upon further investigation, the characters learn that the giants are ruled by Flame himself, who has returned to life yet again.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

The two acts of the adventure ("The Sunken Caverns" and "The True Flame") can be played back-to-back or separated by some time. Both are site-based adventures where the PCs must face deadly enemies on their home turf.

If the PCs don't figure out that Flame is alive again from the hints found in the Sunken Caverns, don't rush them to that conclusion. Instead, plant additional clues that lead them to investigate the problems in the Western Mountains and let them discover Flame's return the hard way.

It is possible to run the two parts of this adventure in the opposite order. In that case, you'll need to add clues that lead the PCs from the dragon's lair in the Western Mountains to the cultists in the Sunken Caverns. Perhaps the kobolds heard a rumor that a red dragon had settled in that area and sent an emissary to forge a deal. If the characters interrogate that emissary (use the statistics for a kobold scout from Act 1), he reveals that he is part of a group that seeks to return an evil dragon to life—something sure to grab the attention of almost any party of adventurers.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

At first, the PCs should believe only that they are on the trail of some pesky (if surprisingly competent and picky) kobold raiders. The following hook can pull the PCs into the action.

The PCs are contacted by the local merchants' guild or a trader of their acquaintance. Twice in as many weeks, shipments of exotic goods—incense, rare oils, spell components, and the like—have been attacked by kobold warriors riding enormous weasels. Each time, the guards have driven off the kobold riders only to find the bulk of their goods gone by the time the battle ends. In one case, the thieves didn't even disturb the cashbox lying adjacent to the stolen goods! The PCs are offered a reward of 5,000 gp to halt the attacks and recover any stolen materials.

If one of the PCs owns a stronghold with a temple, a shipment of materials destined for that temple is attacked in the method noted above.

ACT 1: THE SUNKEN CAVERNS

The lair of the kobolds, an area they call the Sunken Caverns, is located in a dark forest known as the Bogwood. The closest city of any reasonable size is at least 100 miles distant. You can place the Bogwood anywhere appropriate in your campaign world.

TRAVELING THROUGH THE BOGWOOD

The adventure assumes that the party uses potent methods of information gathering (such as *find the path*) to determine the route to the Sunken Caverns, and thus need not waste much time searching the Bogwood. If they need assistance, add an encounter with a helpful NPC druid or another forest denizen who can be persuaded to guide the PCs to the lair of the kobolds (most natives are aware of the kobolds' presence in the vicinity of the pond, but know no more than that). When the characters arrive at the pond concealing the entrance to the caverns, proceed to area **B1**, below.

Most of the Bogwood is typical medium-density forest, filled with trees and light undergrowth. Such areas provide cover and concealment as described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the maximum distance at which the characters can spot creatures is 2d8×10 feet. Overland movement is at half normal speed.

The deepest areas of the Bogwood, including the region surrounding the entrance to the Sunken Caverns, are very thick forest, marked by dense undergrowth and more large trees than a medium-density forest. This provides cover and concealment as described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and grants a +5 circumstance bonus to Hide checks. The maximum Spot distance is 3d6×5 feet. Overland movement is at half normal speed.

In addition, the deepest regions of the Bogwood are dotted by occasional shallow bogs (up to 1 foot of mud or standing water). Movement through a shallow bog is at half normal speed (reducing overland movement to one-fourth speed, thanks to the undergrowth).

The background noise in the forest makes Listen checks more difficult, increasing the DC of the check by +2 per 10 feet, not +1 (but note that Move Silently is also more difficult in undergrowth, as described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

TALES OF FLAME

In his day, Flame achieved a modicum of infamy, which can be determined in a number of ways both magical or mundane. Once the PCs have learned the dragon's name, Gather Information or bardic knowledge checks can reveal the following tidbits:

Check	Information Gained
15	Flame was a mighty red dragon who terrorized various parts of the kingdom for many years before his death at the hands of treasure-seeking adventurers.
20	When Flame was killed, he lived in a dormant volcano in the Western Mountains, not far from a community called Fort Wheelan.
25	Flame was slain not once, but twice. The second death of the dragon occurred some years after the first, in a great crystal fortress that was shortly afterward sucked into the Elemental Plane of Fire.
30	The second time Flame was faced, he had a small army of kobold minions under his control.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS IN THE BOGWOOD

Every 4 hours spent in the Bogwood, roll d% to determine if the PCs encounter something in the swamp.

d%	Encounter	Avg. EL
01-60	None	n/a
61-65	Lizard, giant monitor (1)	2
66-71	Gray ooze (1)	4
72-78	Giant owl* (1)	3
79-85	Shambling mound (1)	6
86-90	Tendriculos (1)	6
91-95	Kobold cultists (1d3 Ftr6 plus 1 dire weasel)	9
96-98	Will-o'-wisps (1d3+1)	9
99-00	Chuuls (1d4+1)	10

*Will not attack unless threatened, and if approached peacefully may be able to share some tidbits about the area (see "Traveling through the Bogwood," above).

B1. GUARDIANS OF THE POND (EL 12)

The canopy of trees breaks, revealing a clearing around a murky pond. Several lizards of various sizes—some as long as 5 feet—lie about on moss-covered rocks surrounding the pond.

The deceptively deep pond conceals an underwater entrance to the Sunken Caverns (see area **B2**, below). The map indicates a number of terrain features, including trees, massive trees, undergrowth, dense undergrowth, and shallow bogs. These terrain features are described in full in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* and are summarized here for ease of play.

Bog, Shallow: Costs two squares of movement to move into a square with a shallow bog, and applies –2 penalty to Tumble checks.

Trees: A creature standing in the same square as a tree enjoys a small amount of cover, gaining a +2 bonus to Armor Class and a +1 bonus on Reflex saves.

Trees, Massive: These take up an entire square and provide cover (+4 AC, +2 Reflex saves) to anyone behind them.

Undergrowth: Costs two squares of movement to move into, and provides concealment (20% miss chance). Applies –2 penalty to Tumble and Move Silently checks.

Undergrowth, Dense: Costs four squares of movement to move into, and provides concealment with a 30% miss chance. Applies –5 penalty to Tumble and Move Silently checks.

If more than one terrain type is in a square, the penalties are cumulative. A square with undergrowth and shallow bog costs four squares to move into and applies a –4 penalty to Tumble checks (and a –2 penalty to Move Silently checks).

Creatures: The entrance to the Sunken Caverns is guarded by a pair of Huge shambling mounds. Reshka, the kobold druid responsible for their care and feeding, basks in monitor lizard form on a moss-covered rock outcropping at the position on the map marked "A" (indistinguishable from the other monitor lizards), while her dire weasel animal companion hides in a hollow area of the outcropping (gaining total cover from all directions). A number of other lizards are also in the area, but won't attack and flee if battle erupts.

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

"Old Embers Never Die" is intended for four 12th-level characters, but it can be modified for parties of different sizes or levels. Consider adapting the adventure as follows:

8th- and 9th-level PCs: Run the adventure as written, but with the following adjustments:

- Reduce all classed NPCs by 2–3 levels. Make Vermilona a Clr7/Dracolyte1, which eliminates her Alertness and Silent Spell feats and 2 levels of clerical spellcasting, among other changes.
- Reduce the advanced creatures by 4–6 HD apiece. This may reduce the creatures one size category (check the *Monster Manual* for details).
- Make the elder fire elemental a huge fire elemental, and make Flame a young adult red dragon.

10th- and 11th-level PCs: Run the adventure as written, but with the following adjustments:

- Reduce all classed NPCs by 1–2 levels. Make Vermilona a Clr7/Dracolyte2, which eliminates her Alertness feat and 1 level of clerical spellcasting, among other changes.
- Reduce the advanced creatures by 2–4 HD apiece, but not so far as to reduce the creatures from their current size.
- Make the elder fire elemental a greater fire elemental.

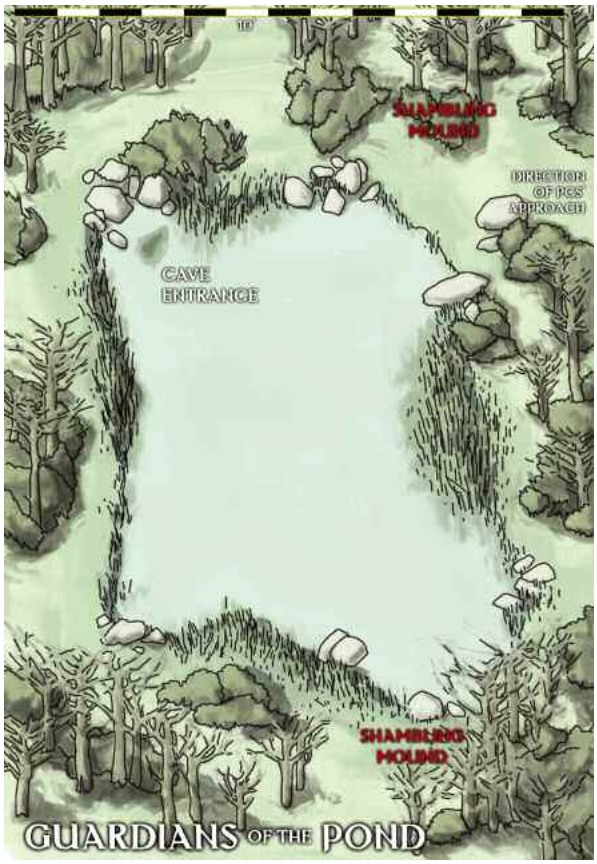
13th- and 14th-level PCs: Run the adventure as written, but with the following adjustments:

- Increase all classed NPCs by 1–2 levels. Make Vermilona a Clr8/Dracolyte4, which adds 2 levels of clerical spellcasting, among other changes.
- Increase the number of shambling mounds, dire weasels, hell hounds, giant crocodiles, and fire giants present in any given encounter by 50% (round fractions up).
- Add 8 HD to the elder fire elemental, making it a CR 13 creature, and increase the age category of the skeletal red dragon to wyrm (CR 12).

15th- and 16th-level PCs: Run the adventure as written, but with the following adjustments:

- Increase all classed NPCs by four levels. Make Vermilona a Clr9/Dracolyte5, which gives her a wyrmling red dragon as a foster dragon and adds 4 levels of spellcasting, among other changes.
- Double the number of shambling mounds, dire weasels, hell hounds, giant crocodiles, and fire giants present in any given encounter.
- Add 16 HD to the elder fire elemental, making it a CR 15 creature, and increase the age category of the skeletal red dragon to great wyrm (CR 13).
- Make Flame a mature adult red dragon.

Treat parties of two or three PCs as being 1 or 2 levels below their actual level. Treat parties of five or six PCs as being a level higher than their actual level, and parties of seven or eight PCs as being 2 levels higher than actual.



Lizards (7): hp 2 each; *Monster Manual* 275.

Monitor Lizards (3): hp 22 each; *Monster Manual* 275.

Huge Shambling Mounds (2): CR 9; Huge Plant; HD 16d8+80; hp 152; Init –1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 21, touch 7, flat-footed 21; BAB +12; Grap +29; Atk +20 melee (3d6+9, slam); Full Atk +20/+20 melee (3d6+9, 2 slams); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA improved grab, constrict 3d6+13; SQ darkvision 60 ft., plant traits, electricity immunity, fire resistance 10; AL N; SV Fort +15, Ref +4, Will +7; Str 29, Dex 8, Con 21, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills: Hide +4*, Listen +4, Move Silently +4. *Feats:* Improved Bull Rush, Iron Will, Cleave, Great Cleave, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam).

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the shambler must hit an opponent of Huge size or smaller with both slam attacks. If it gets a hold, it can constrict. This shambling mound has a grapple bonus of +29.

Constrict (Ex): A shambler deals 3d6+13 points of damage with a successful grapple check against a held creature.

Plant: Immune to mind-influencing affects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and polymorphing. Not subject to critical hits.

Electricity Immunity (Ex): Shamblers take no damage from electricity. Instead, any electrical attack used against a shambler grants it 1d4 points of temporary Constitution. The shambler loses these points at the rate of 1 per hour.

Skills*: Add +12 to Hide checks in swampy or forested area.

Reshka, Female Kobold Drd9: CR 9; Small Humanoid (reptilian); HD 9d8+3; hp 47; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15; BAB +6/+1; Grap +2; Atk +7 melee (1d4, Small club); Full Atk +7/+2 melee (1d4, Small club); SA spells, wild shape (3/day, Small, Medium, or Large animal); SQ animal companion, darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity, nature sense, resist nature's lure, trackless step, venom immunity, wild empathy (+12), woodland stride; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +12; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Skills: Concentration +12, Handle Animal +10, Hide +9, Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +5, Profession (mining) +8, Search +2, Spot +5, Survival +8 (+10 aboveground), Swim +8*. *Feats:* Alertness, Dodge, Natural Spell, Toughness.

*Includes –2 armor check penalty (–1 doubled for Swim) and bonus from *ring of swimming*.

Monitor Lizard Form: as above plus Spd swim 30 ft.; Atk/Full Atk +9 melee (1d8+4, bite); SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +9; Str 17, Con 17; +4 racial bonus to Hide and Move Silently (or +8 racial bonus to Hide in forested or overgrown areas).

Spells Prepared (6/5/5/4/2/1; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds* ×2, *detect magic, flare, purify food and drink, resistance*; 1st—*entangle, faerie fire, goodberry, obscuring mist, speak with animals*; 2nd—*barkskin, bull's strength, produce flame, resist elements, summon swarm*; 3rd—*call lightning, cure moderate wounds, speak with plants, water breathing*; 4th—*control water, flame strike*; 5th—*animal growth*.

Possessions: +1 leather armor, cloak of resistance +3, ring of swimming, divine scroll of *dispel magic*, 5 goodberries (cure 1 hp each).

Krleese, Dire Weasel Animal Companion: CR N/A; Medium Animal; HD 7d8; hp 31; Init +5; Spd 40 ft.; AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 16; BAB +5; Grap +8; Atk/Full Atk +11 melee (1d6+4, bite); SA attach, blood drain; SQ link, share spells, devotion, scent; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +10, Will +6; Str 16, Dex 21, Con 10, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills: Hide +9, Listen +3, Move Silently +9, Spot +9. *Feats:* Alertness, Stealthy, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (bite).

Attach (Ex): A dire weasel that hits with its bite attack latches onto the opponent's body with its powerful jaws. An attached dire weasel loses its Dex bonus to AC.

Blood Drain (Ex): A dire weasel drains blood for 2d4 points of temporary Constitution damage each round it remains attached.

Devotion (Ex): Gains a +4 bonus on Will saves vs. Enchantment effects.

Scent (Ex): Detect opponents within 30 feet. Exact location is not revealed unless within 5 feet.

Tricks Known: Attack, come, defend, down, fetch, guard, heel, seek, track.

With *animal growth*: as above except Large Animal; HD 7d8+14; hp 45; Init +4; AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 18; Atk/Full Atk +12 melee (1d8+10, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SQ DR 10/magic; SV Fort +10, Ref +13, Will +10; Str 24, Dex 19, Con 14; Hide +4, Move Silently +8.

Tactics: The shambling mounds remain motionless, blending with the swampy terrain (Spot DC 26 to notice them). If they see or hear intruders, they rise up from positions of hiding

to attack. The shamblers attempt to grapple and pin characters, then pull them underwater to drown.

Characters who approach stealthily may avoid detection by the shambling mounds. The dire weasel's scent allows it to detect the presence of creatures within 30 feet, so even silent, invisible creatures can't escape its notice. If the dire weasel smells non-kobolds approaching, it growls, alerting Reshka.

Once alerted to the presence of intruders, the druid casts *animal growth* on the dire weasel (preceded by *barkskin* and *bull's strength*, if time permits), then releases it to attack the characters. She avoids melee in the ensuing battle, instead remaining hidden and casting spells to assist her allies. A favorite technique is to use *call lightning* on the shambling mounds: each bolt adds 1d4 temporary Constitution to the shambler (typically adding 16 or 32 hp per bolt). She targets a spellcaster with *summon swarm*, or a tough foe with *flame strike*. If two or more allies are defeated, she uses *obscuring mist* to conceal a retreat into the deep bog.

Development: If Reshka escapes, the rest of the inhabitants of the sunken caverns will be forewarned of the characters' approach within a few minutes. For the next hour, all the kobolds will be at high alert. Any spells or effects with a duration of at least 1 hour will be cast or activated in preparation for defense of their home. After that, the kobolds calm down, but remain wary for another 1d4+1 days, taking 10 on Spot and Listen checks with no penalty.

Reshka replaces destroyed shambling mounds with normal (6 HD) versions within 24 hours. She won't replace her dire weasel animal companion until at least three days go by without interruption by the PCs.

Treasure: Reshka keeps most of her possessions in the hollow area of the rocky outcropping. The floor of this area, roughly 5 feet deep and 10 feet long, is covered by a mat of leaves and lichen. Concealed beneath this mat (Search DC 15 to find) is a waterproof leather satchel with a *potion of cure moderate wounds*, a necklace of lizard teeth (5 gp), 217 sp, 102 gp, and a gold ring set with an emerald (650 gp).

B2. GUARD POST (EL 11)

The small cave in the pond is very difficult to see from the surface (Spot DC 40), but somewhat easier to notice from underwater (Spot DC 30). Anyone searching the pond while underwater can find the cave with relative simplicity (Search DC 15). The cave grants access to a small tunnel. This narrow, water-filled tunnel leads about 30 feet down at a 45-degree-angle before leveling off. After another 50 feet it turns sharply up, becoming a 15-foot-tall shaft that opens into area **B2**.

A wooden grate sits atop the opening in the area. A Small or smaller creature can wriggle through easily, but a Medium creature must make an Escape Artist (DC 30) check to fit through. Large or larger creatures can't fit through at all unless their bodies are exceptionally slender or flexible (such as a snake or an ooze). The grate can be lifted with a Strength check (DC 15), but characters in the water have little leverage and suffer a –4 penalty to such checks. Due to the cramped tunnel, no more than two characters can work together to lift the grate from the tunnel.

Wooden Grate: hp 30; Hardness 5; break DC 23.

Trap: Anyone manipulating the grate without first releasing the lever inside the chamber (near the passage leading deeper into the caverns) also sets off a trap. Small, rusty, filth-smeared spears fire out of tiny holes in the watery tunnel shaft. Each creature in the shaft is subject to 1d4+1 spear attacks.

Spear Trap: CR 4; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; hidden switch bypass (in area **2**); Atk +15 melee (1d6/×3 crit plus disease, spear); Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 25). Each character damaged by a spear may be infected by filth fever (Fortitude DC 12; incubation 1d3 days; 1d3 Dex, 1d3 Con).

Once the PCs are inside the area, read the following text:

> The watery tunnel comes up into a wide, damp cave that reeks of wet fur. A single narrow tunnel leads out of the chamber.

The ceiling of this room is a full 10 feet high, allowing even the Huge dire weasels to move about without penalty.

Creatures: Four kobolds—two fighters and two rogues—along with a pair of Huge dire weasels stand guard here.

Guards, Male and Female Kobold Ftr6 (2): CR 6; Small Humanoid (reptilian); HD 6d10+6; hp 57 each; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 18; BAB +6/+1; Grap +2; Atk +11 melee (1d4/19–20, masterwork short sword) or +10 ranged (1d6/×3, masterwork longbow); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d4/19–20, masterwork short sword), or +10/+5 ranged (1d6/×3, masterwork longbow); SQ darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 11, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb +5*, Craft (trapmaking) +3, Jump +5*, Listen +4, Profession (mining) +4, Search +2, Spot +3. *Feats:* Alertness, Dodge, Mobility, Quick Draw, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword).

*Includes –2 armor check penalty.

WITHIN THE SUNKEN CAVERNS

The tunnels in this area average barely 4 feet high—plenty tall for a kobold, but forcing most Medium or larger creatures to crouch. Any character standing at least 5 feet tall suffers a –1 penalty to attacks (except with piercing melee weapons) and to AC while in the area except while prone (in which case the character suffers the normal penalty for being prone). Large creatures must squeeze to get through the tunnels at all, which inflicts a –4 penalty to attacks and AC. Huge creatures generally can't fit through the tunnels at all unless they are particularly lean (such as the dire weasels, which can move about as if they were Large creatures). The ceilings of the rooms are 10 feet high.

Unless otherwise noted, all areas within the Sunken Caverns are dark, requiring darkvision or a light source to see. The area is also very damp, which applies a –5 penalty to Climb checks and gives creatures and objects a +2 bonus to saves to avoid catching on fire. The soft limestone walls of the caverns and tunnels require a Climb check (DC 20) to ascend or descend.

Possessions: Small *+1 chain shirt*, Small buckler, Small masterwork short sword, Small masterwork longbow with 20 arrows, *potion of cure serious wounds*.

Scouts, Male and Female Kobold Rog7 (2): CR 7; Small Humanoid (reptilian); HD 7d6; hp 21 each; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 20; BAB +5; Grap +1; Atk/Full Atk +10 melee (1d4/19–20, masterwork short sword) or +10 ranged (1d4/×3, masterwork shortbow); SA sneak attack +4d6; SQ darkvision 60 ft., evasion, light sensitivity, trapfinding, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +9, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb +9, Craft (trapmaking) +12, Hide +18, Listen +13, Move Silently +14, Search +12, Spot +13, Tumble +14. *Feats:* Alertness, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse.

Possessions: Small *+1 leather armor*, Small buckler, Small masterwork short sword, Small masterwork shortbow, *potion of invisibility*.

Dire Weasels, Advanced (2): CR 6; Huge Animal; HD 9d8+36; hp 76 each; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 15; Atk/Full Atk +15 melee (2d6+15, bite); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA attach, blood drain; SQ scent; AL N; SV Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +6; Str 30, Dex 17, Con 18, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills: Hide +5, Listen +3, Move Silently +7, Spot +5. *Feats:* Alertness, Iron Will, Stealthy, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (bite).

Attach (Ex): A dire weasel that hits with its bite attack latches onto the opponent's body with its powerful jaws. An attached dire weasel loses its Dex bonus to AC.

Blood Drain (Ex): A dire weasel drains blood for 2d4 points of temporary Constitution damage each round it remains attached.

Scent (Ex): Detect opponents within 30 feet. Exact location is not revealed unless within 5 feet.

Tactics: Unless warned by Reshka the druid, the guards are pretty lax, relying on the dire weasels to warn them of intruders. They fire their bows at any enemy fumbling with the grate at the entrance (characters squeezing through are denied their Dexterity bonus to AC and thus ripe for a sneak attack).

Once the characters gain access to the chamber, the weasels charge into combat. The guards use Spring Attack to enter melee together, aiding each other's attacks, then retreating out of easy reach of their opponents. The scouts attempt to deliver sneak attacks (either invisibly or by flanking), focusing on the same target as the guards or the weasels. If both weasels or any two kobolds are killed, a remaining kobold flees to area **B5** to warn the rest of the complex.

Ad-hoc XP Award: Award an extra 25% XP for any enemy defeated in this area due to their advantageous position.

B3. SORCERER'S CHAMBER (EL 10)

The door to this chamber is sealed with an *arcane lock* cast by Sszar the sorcerer. A peephole 3 inches from the floor (Search DC 20 to locate) allows the occupant to spy on anyone in the hallway.

Trap (EL 8): Inside the room and above the door is a tank of sticky, flammable liquid, the result of much experimentation by Sszar. Effectively, the liquid is a combination of alchemist's fire and a sticky goo similar to that contained within a tanglefoot bag. Anyone opening the door triggers this trap, which sprays the fiery goo out into the hallway in a 10-foot-long, 5-foot-wide burst starting at the doorway. Anyone in this area must make two Reflex saves. The first (DC 20) is to halve the fire damage inflicted by the fiery goo, while the second (DC 25) is to avoid becoming glued to the floor (as a tanglefoot bag). Even with a successful second saving throw, anyone within the area is entangled (just as if he had been hit by a tanglefoot bag). A character glued to the floor by the liquid can't roll around on the ground to extinguish the flames.

The trap only has enough fiery goo for one burst, after which the tank must be reloaded (Sszar doesn't have enough goo on hand to refill the tank). From inside the room, the trap is obvious (no Search check needed to find, +10 to Disable Device checks to disable).

Fiery Goo Trap: CR 8; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-radius semicircular burst); never-miss; Reflex save (DC 20) half damage, 10d6 fire damage, then 4d6 the next round; plus Reflex save (DC 25) partial (as tanglefoot bag); Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 35).

Creatures: Sszar the sorcerer lives and works in this split-level area. He doesn't keep a regular schedule, so at any given time he is 75% likely to be awake and working in the main portion of the chamber. The remainder of the time he is asleep in his loft (area **B3a**). His familiar, a weasel named Fingerbiter, guards him while he sleeps.

Sszar, Male Kobold Sor10: CR 10; Small Humanoid (reptilian); HD 10d4+13; hp 40; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 16; BAB +7/+2; Grap +0; Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (1d3–3, Small dagger), or +12 ranged touch (damage varies, ray spell); SA spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +13, Will +10; Str 4, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 18.

Skills: Bluff +9, Concentration +14, Craft (alchemy) +6, Craft (trapmaking) +5, Diplomacy +6, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Listen +2*, Search +3, Spellcraft +12, Spot +2*. *Feats:* Alertness*, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness, Weapon Focus (ray).

*Sszar gains Alertness, and its bonuses, only if Fingerbiter is within 5 feet.

Spells Known (6/7/7/7/6/3, base save DC = 14 + spell level): 0—*acid splash, arcane mark, detect magic, flare, ghost sound, light, mending, message, read magic*; 1st—*alarm, mage armor, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, unseen servant*; 2nd—*arcane lock, cat's grace, detect thoughts, scorching ray*; 3rd—*dispel magic, lightning bolt, slow*; 4th—*dimension door, improved invisibility*; 5th—*baleful polymorph.*

Possessions: Cloak of resistance +3, amulet of Charisma +2, ring of the ram (12 charges), *potion of cure serious wounds,* Small dagger, spell component pouch (includes 50 gp gold dust).

Fingerbiter, Weasel Familiar: CR N/A; Tiny Magical Beast (augmented animal); HD 10; hp 20; Init +2; Spd 20 ft., climb 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 17; BAB +7; Grap –5; Atk/Full Atk +11 melee (1d3–4, bite); Space/Reach 2 1/2 ft./0 ft.; SA attach, deliver touch spells; SQ empathic link, improved evasion, scent, share spells, speak with animals, speak with master; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 5.

Skills: Balance +10, Climb +10, Concentration +13, Hide +11, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Move Silently +8, Spellcraft +11, Spot +3. *Feats:* Weapon Finesse.

Attach (Ex): If a weasel hits with a bite attack, it uses its powerful jaws to latch onto the opponent's body and automatically deals bite damage each round it remains attached. An attached weasel loses its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class.

Scent (Ex): Detect opponents within 30 feet. Exact location is not revealed unless within 5 feet.

Tactics: Sszar spends most of his waking hours with *mage armor* in effect (granting him the listed AC). If Sszar is awake and hears anyone outside his door, he tells Fingerbiter to look through the peephole. Should Fingerbiter see anything other than kobolds or dire weasels, it warns Sszar, who immediately casts *improved invisibility* on himself, retreats to his loft (**B3a**), and uses *detect thoughts* to determine the nature of the intruders.

From his position of cover, Sszar targets the first intruder he sees with *baleful polymorph*, attempting to change the target into a lizard. He follows this up with *slow* to delay his attackers' progress. He prefers to remain hidden as long as possible, refraining from casting spells that might reveal his location, such as *lightning bolt* or *scorching ray*.

If any character manages to reach his loft, he uses his *ring of the ram* to bull rush the opponent back to the ground below. Should he find himself cornered, he casts *dimension door* and retreats to area **B5** to warn the rest of the inhabitants.

Treasure: Among the bottles, flasks, and vials on the table are three flasks of alchemist's fire and a *potion of water breathing*, which are likely destroyed if any damaging area spells go off in the room.

B3a. Loft

Sszar the sorcerer sleeps in this loft area, accessed by a small ladder. The ladder holds a maximum of 50 pounds—any weight greater than that breaks the rungs.

Any creature in the loft area, which is 10 feet above the floor of area **B3**, enjoys cover (+4 AC and +2 Reflex saves; no attacks of opportunity) against characters in area **B3**. The loft itself is barely tall enough for a kobold to stand—Medium creatures must squeeze to enter the area.

Treasure: Scattered among the many layers of rags and furs that Sszar uses as a bed are 327 gp and 42 pp, along with a long-forgotten *potion of invisibility* (Search DC 20 to find the potion).

B4. Storage

This small dry room holds a few barrels and crates. A side of meat hangs from a hook set in the ceiling.

The kobolds store their supplies here, but nothing of value.

B5. Chamber of the Divine (EL 13)

A heavy animal hide hangs in the doorway, screening it from the hall. Unless the party approaches stealthily, the inhabitants of this chamber almost certainly hear them coming and prepare.

New Weapon Type

This material is an exclusive preview from the *Draconomicon,* a new D&D supplement releasing in November, 2003.

Dragonfang Weapons

Dragonfang weapons are masterwork weapons crafted from the claws and teeth of a dragon. In addition to the +1 non-magical enhancement bonus to attacks granted by its masterwork quality, a dragonfang weapon deals 1 point of energy damage on each successful hit. The type of energy is the same as that of the dragon's damaging breath weapon. If a dragon doesn't have a breath weapon that deals acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic damage, dragonfang weapons made from its remains do not deal any extra damage. This damage is treated as an extraordinary (and thus non-magical) feature of the weapon. It doesn't stack with any other energy damage (of the same type) inflicted by the weapon.

A single tooth or claw from a dragon can be crafted into a light weapon of the same size category of the dragon, a one-handed weapon of one size category less, or a two-handed weapon of two size categories less. A dragon's body can usually provide enough material for up to 12 weapons.

Only piercing and slashing weapons may be created as dragonfang weapons.

Price Adjustment: +300 gp.

Beyond the curtain of animal hides is a large room that smells of wet fur. A pile of hides sits atop a wooden platform along one wall. A passage leads out the far side of the room.

This chamber is home to Vermilona the dracolyte and her consort Skreebo, a half-red dragon kobold. Vermilona spends most of her time with the skeletal dragon in area **B6**, leaving Skreebo alone with their pets. For his part, Skreebo can't understand why the kobolds don't simply use the skeletal dragon to lay waste to a nearby village, but Vermilona claims to have "bigger plans."

The two kobolds share a bed which is little more than a fur-covered wooden platform balanced atop a few big rocks.

Creatures: A very bored Skreebo loiters here, along with two Huge dire weasels. One weasel rests near the bed where Skreebo sits, while the other reclines in one of the nests to either side of the entrance from the hallway.

Dire Weasels, Advanced (2): hp 89, 84; see area **B2** for other statistics.

Skreebo, Male Half-Red Dragon Kobold Rog5/Ftr6: CR 13; Small Dragon; HD 5d6+15 plus 6d10+18; hp 86; Init +7; Spd 20 ft.; AC 27, touch 14, flat-footed 24; BAB +9/+4; Grap +9; Atk +17 melee (1d10+10/17–20 plus 1 fire, Small +2 *red dragonfang greatsword*) or +14 melee (1d4+4, bite); Full Atk +17/+12 melee (1d10+10/17–20 plus 1 fire, Small +2 *red dragonfang greatsword*) and +9 melee (1d4+2, bite), or +14 melee (1d3+4, 2 claws) and +9 melee (1d4+2, bite); SA breath weapon (6d8 cone of fire; Reflex DC 13 half), sneak attack +3d6; SQ darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, light sensitivity, immunities (fire, sleep, paralysis), evasion, uncanny dodge, trap sense +1; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +13, Will +7; Str 18, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +10, Craft (trapmaking) +3, Diplomacy +6, Handle Animal +10, Hide +12*, Intimidate +6, Listen +10, Move Silently +8*, Ride (dire weasel) +6, Search +10, Sense Motive +8, Spot +10. *Feats:* Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

*Includes –3 armor check penalty.

Possessions: Small +3 *dragonhide breastplate*, Small +2 *red dragonfang greatsword* (new item; see the sidebar on page 31), *cloak of resistance* +2.

NEW FEATS

This is an exclusive preview from the *Draconomicon,* a new D&D supplement releasing in November, 2003.

CLINGING BREATH [METABREATH]

Your breath weapon clings to creatures and continues to affect them on the round after you breathe.

Prerequisite: Dragon, Con 13

Benefit: Your breath weapon has its normal effects, but also clings to anything caught in its area. The clinging breath weapon lasts one round. On the second round, the clinging breath weapon inflicts one-half the damage it inflicted the previous round. Creatures that evade damage from the breath weapon (such as creatures with the evasion special quality or incorporeal creatures) do not suffer the extra damage. For example, an old silver dragon uses its cold breath and inflicts 72 points of cold damage (36 points with a successful saving throw). The following round, foes who failed their saves against the breath suffer an additional 36 points of cold damage, and foes who made successful saves suffer 18 points of cold damage.

A foe can take a full-round action to attempt to remove the clinging breath weapon before taking any additional damage. It takes a successful Reflex saving throw (same DC as your normal breath weapon) to remove the effect. Rolling around on the ground grants a +2 to the saving throw, but leaves the foe prone. The breath weapon cannot be removed or smothered by jumping into water. The clinging breath weapon can be magically dispelled (DC equal to your breath weapon save DC).

This feat only works on breath weapons that have instantaneous durations and that inflict some kind of damage, such as energy damage (acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic), ability damage, or negative levels.

When you use this feat, add +1 to the number of rounds you must wait before using your breath weapon again.

Special: You can apply this feat more than once to the same breath weapon. Each time you do, the clinging breath lasts an additional round.

DRAGONTHRALL

You have pledged your life to the service of evil dragonkind.

Prerequisite: Speak Language (Draconic).

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus to Bluff checks made against dragons, and a +2 bonus to Ride checks made to ride dragons.

You gain a +4 bonus to saves against the frightful presence of evil dragons.

You suffer a –2 penalty to saves against Enchantment spells and effects cast by dragons.

IMPROVED MULTIATTACK

You are particularly adept at using all your natural weapons at once.

Prerequisite: Three or more natural weapons, Multiattack

Benefit: Your secondary attacks with natural weapons suffer no penalty to hit. They still add only one-half your Strength bonus, if any, to damage dealt.

Normal: Without this feat, your secondary natural attacks suffer a –5 penalty (or a –2 penalty if you have the Multiattack feat).

LARGE AND IN CHARGE

You can prevent opponents from closing inside your reach

Prerequisite: Natural reach of 10 feet or more, size Large

Benefit: When you make a successful attack of opportunity against an opponent who is moving inside your threatened area, you can force the opponent back to the 5-foot space he was in before he provoked the attack of opportunity. After you hit with your attack of opportunity, make an opposed Strength check against your opponent, You gain a +4 bonus for each size category larger than you opponent you are, and an additional +1 bonus for every 5 points of damage you dealt with your attack of opportunity. If you win the opposed check, your opponents is pushed back 5 feet into the space he just left. An opponent you push cannot move any farther this round.

Tactics: Skreebo launches himself into any fight that presents itself, happy to be doing anything other than waiting around. He has trained his pets to take up flanking positions with him, allowing him to deliver sneak attacks.

Skreebo won't retreat to area **B6** unless at least one weasel is slain and he is outnumbered, as he wants to appear powerful in the eyes of the other kobolds. He is aware of the trap in the passageway and attempts to get one or more PCs to follow him in that direction.

Treasure: A silver statuette of a five-headed dragon (worth 125 gp) sits in a tiny niche in the south wall.

A locked chest (Open Lock DC 20) under the bed holds 3,427 sp, 218 gp, and 44 pp, as well as a journal kept by Vermilona. The pages, written in Draconic, relate her deal with a group of azer to purchase the skeleton of a mighty red dragon named Flame, whom Vermilona once served in a great crystal fortress and her (surprisingly) unsuccessful efforts to resurrect the dragon. (The cleric doesn't realize that the reason she can't resurrect Flame is that he's already alive again, thanks to the cloning effort of the githyanki wizard.) Vermilona carries the only key to the chest.

A 2-foot-wide, 10-foot-long wooden plank lies in one corner of the room. It is used to bypass the pit trap between here and area **B6**.

B6. RITUAL CHAMBER (EL 15)

The passage from area **B5** leads down at a shallow angle, widening to a maximum of 10 feet across as it goes.

Trap: Any creature who crosses the "X" marked on the map arms the trap for 10 minutes. After the trap is armed, the next creature weighing at least 50 pounds who steps into that area triggers the trapdoor, which dumps all characters in the shaded area into a steep chute leading to the lower floor of area **B6**. These characters suffer a small amount of damage and end up prone at the exit point of the chute.

Chute Trap: CR 3; mechanical; location trigger; timed reset (every 3 rounds); Reflex save (DC 25) avoids; fall (1d6, fall); Search (DC 30); Disable Device (DC 25).

Read the following text to any character who goes down the chute.

> The steep chute empties onto the floor of a limestone cave; scattered pools of water and piles of coins dot the area. Standing before you is a truly gigantic skeletal creature. The red pinpoint gleams in its eyesockets betray its animate nature, just before it turns its toothy maw in your direction. Bony wings creak and flap uselessly as it moves to attack.

If the characters enter area **B6** by normal means, read the following boxed text.

> The passage leads to the upper portion of a large limestone cavern. The ceiling extends up at least 20 feet. Not far from the entrance, the floor drops away into a pit or shaft. The air seems surprisingly warm, combining with the dampness to create an uncomfortable humidity

The pit is 20 feet deep, with handholds cut into the wall in various places (Climb DC 15).

Creatures: Vermilona spends a great deal of time in this area, attempting various rituals and experiments that she hopes will turn the undead creature into a dracolich (they won't). The warm temperature is from an elder fire elemental that Vermilona has called here. She hopes somehow to bind its spirit to the skeletal dragon, but the elemental thinks that it is merely assisting her efforts in the hopes of receiving a great reward.

DOMINATION PRESTIGE DOMAIN

Deities: None (see Appendix II).

Granted Power: You gain the Spell Focus (Enchantment) feat.

DOMINATION DOMAIN SPELLS

1 **Command.** One subject obeys one-word command for 1 round.
2 **Enthrall.** Captivates all within 100 ft. + 10 ft./level.
3 **Suggestion.** Compels subject to follow stated course of action.
4 **Dominate Person.** Controls humanoid telepathically.
5 **Greater Command.** As command, but affects one subject/level.
6 **Geas/Quest.** As lesser geas, but affects any creature.
7 **Mass Suggestion.** As *suggestion,* plus one/level subjects.
8 **True Domination.** As *dominate person,* but later saves at –4.*
9 **Monstrous Thrall.** X As *true domination,* but permanent and affects any creature.*

*This spell is found in *Defenders of the Faith*.

The third inhabitant of the chamber is the animated skeleton of Flame himself, now a Gargantuan skeletal dragon. To Vermilona's dismay, none of her efforts have succeeded in restoring any of the dragon's Intelligence or memories, but she has a great deal of patience.

Elder Fire Elemental: hp 204; *Monster Manual* 99.

Skeletal Ancient Red Dragon: CR 11; Gargantuan Undead; HD 34d12+34; hp 255; Init +4; Spd 40 ft.; AC 12, touch 6, flat-footed 12; Atk +44 melee (4d6+14, bite); Full Atk +44 melee (4d6+14, bite) and +39 melee (2d8+7, 2 claws) and +39 melee(2d6+7, 2 wings) and +39 melee (2d8+21, tail slap); Space/Reach 20 ft./15 ft.; SA frightful presence, tail sweep; SQ blindsense, immunities, keen senses, scent, undead, DR 5/bludgeoning; SR 28; AL N; SV Fort +28, Ref +19, Will +19; Str 39, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 25.

Feats: Improved Initiative.

Blindsense (Ex): Dragons notice and locate creatures within a range of 60 feet. Opponents the dragon can't actually see still have 100% concealment against the dragon.

Keen Senses (Ex): A dragon sees four times as well a human in low-light conditions and twice as well in normal light. It also has darkvision with a range of 100 feet × the dragon's age category.

Scent (Ex): Detect opponents within 30 feet. Exact location is not revealed, unless within 5 feet.

Frightful Presence (Ex): This skeletal dragon can unsettle foes with its mere presence. The ability takes effect automatically whenever the dragon attacks, charges, or flies overhead. Creatures within a radius of 300 feet are subject to the effect if they have fewer than 34 HD.

A potentially affected creature that succeeds at a Will save (DC 34) remains immune to this dragon's frightful presence for one day. On a failure, creatures with 4 or fewer HD become panicked for 4d6 rounds and those with 5 or more HD become shaken for 4d6 rounds. Dragons ignore the frightful presence of skeletal dragons.

Immunities (Ex): This skeletal dragon has immunity to cold and fire.

Tail Sweep (Ex): The skeletal dragon can sweep with its tail as a standard action. The sweep affects a half circle with a radius of 30 feet, centered on the dragon's rear. Creatures within the swept area are affected if they are Small or smaller. The sweep automatically deals 2d6+21 points of damage (Reflex DC 27 for half).

Undead Traits: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

See Appendix I for more information on the skeletal dragon template.

Vermilona, Female Kobold Clr7/Dracolyte3: CR 10; Small Humanoid (reptilian); HD 10d8+3; hp 53; Init +5; Spd 20 ft.; AC 27, touch 12, flat-footed 26; BAB +7/+2; Grap +1; Atk +5 melee (1d4–2/×3, shortspear); Full Atk +5/+0 melee (1d4–2/×3, shortspear), or +8 ranged (damage varies, ranged touch); SA spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., light sensitivity, rebuke undead 5/day (+4 to turn checks); AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +11 (+15 vs. dragons' frightful presence; +9 vs. Enchantment spells and effects cast by dragons); Str 6, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +8 (+12 vs. dragons), Concentration +9, Craft (trapmaking) +4, Diplomacy +8, Listen +5, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (religion) +9, Ride +3 (dragons), Search +3, Spellcraft +5, Spot +7. *Feats:* Alertness, Dragonthrall*, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (Enchantment), Toughness.

*New feat described in the sidebar on page 32.

Spells Prepared (6/6/6/5/4/3; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, light* ×2, *mending, purify food and drink, read magic;* 1st—*bless, command**†, *entropic shield, obscuring mist, protection from good, shield of faith;* 2nd—*bear's endurance, cure moderate wounds, invisibility**, *death knell, resist energy, silence;* 3rd—*contagion**, *create food and water, invisibility purge, prayer, searing light;* 4th—*confusion**†, *cure critical wounds,* silent *dispel magic, summon monster IV;* 5th—*greater command**†, silent *summon monster IV, wall of stone.*

*Domain spell. *Domains:* Destruction (smite 1/day: +4 bonus to attack, +10 bonus to damage); Domination (gains Spell Focus—Enchantment as bonus feat); Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills).

†Enchantment spell. The base save DC for these spells is 14 + spell level.

Possessions: Small +2 *dragonhide full plate armor,* Small +2 *dragonhide heavy shield, periapt of Wisdom* +2, Small masterwork shortspear, divine scroll of *inflict critical wounds* and *summon monster V,* gold ring (350 gp), gold unholy symbol of Tiamat set with five tiny rubies (1,500 gp), key to chest in area **B5**.

See Appendix II for more information on the dracolyte prestige class.

Tactics: Vermilona orders the fire elemental to attack intruders while she casts *invisibility* and moves to a hiding place along the wall. From there, she uses *summon monster* spells to bring reinforcements, then casts *silence* against an enemy spellcaster. She casts whatever personal enhancements (such as *bear's endurance* and *shield of faith*) that she has time for, as well as *bless* to assist allies. She uses her silenced spells judiciously to maintain her hiding place. *Wall of stone* allows her to divide the battlefield, trap characters in the room, or aid an escape.

The skeletal dragon attacks anything that enters its pit, such as a character falling (or flying) down the chute. Thanks to its size and reach, it can also attack creatures on the upper level if they get within 15 feet of the edge.

If any other allies (such as Skreebo or Sszar) have retreated here, they fight valiantly, sacrificing their own lives if necessary to protect Vermilona or the skeletal dragon.

Treasure: Several packages of incense and rare oils lie around the upper portion of the chamber, the proceeds of the kobolds' recent thievery. All told, these are worth 1,000 gp.

Another of Vermilona's journals can be found here, detailing her latest efforts regarding the skeletal form of Flame. She seems genuinely puzzled as to why her earlier attempts to restore life to the dragon failed, but now seeks instead to at least restore some of Flame's intellect and personality in the form of

a dracolich. One of the final entries indicates that if her current experiment fails, Vermilona plans to travel to one of Flame's earlier lairs in the Western Mountains in order to harvest some of the "spiritual echo" remaining there.

In an attempt to awaken the natural greed of a red dragon, Vermilona has scattered some treasure in the pit, totaling 3,792 cp, 1,219 sp, and 341 gp.

ACT 2: THE TRUE FLAME

This part of the adventure follows some time after the characters complete Act 1. The PCs may be drawn to the Western Mountains by clues found in the Sunken Caverns, or you might have to insert additional adventure hooks to pull them into Act 2.

- A bard tells tales of a lost dragon's hoard hidden in the Western Mountains.
- While visiting Fort Wheelan to deliver an important package, the characters hear the laments of local merchants complaining about "the fire giant problem."

THE WESTERN MOUNTAINS

The range of rugged peaks known as the Western Mountains rises from the forested lands of the kingdom's border. They have always been regarded as a dangerous frontier area and are known to be home to mountain lions, bears, giants, bandits, and the occasional dragon. Some of the peaks are still volcanically active, although none has erupted violently in over a decade. The two nearest active volcanoes are Mount Torch and Roaring Peak.

A rough trail that connects two fortified towns (see "The Forts," below) leads through the area of the Western Mountains in which this adventure takes place. This trail enters near Fort Silan at a point known as Roaring Peak Pass, heading west into the foothills. Once into the mountains, it turns north and goes past the foot of Mount Torch. It then turns east, roughly paralleling the royal highway some 30 miles to the south until it drops down into the foothills again northwest of Fort Wheelan.

This entrance is called the Pass of the Parents, named for the two 100-foot-tall statues that flank the road. The statues depict a man and a woman, their arms reaching toward one another with palms up, clearly distraught and saddened. A matching statue about 2 miles back up the trail depicts a 30-foot-tall young girl sitting and crying on a ledge 50 feet above the pass.

THE FORTS

Fort Silan and Fort Wheelan stand at opposite ends of the trail that connects Roaring Peak Pass with the Pass of the Parents. The two forts are essentially identical. Each one houses approximately 240 soldiers (mostly 1st-level warriors), plus an equal number of support personnel (cooks, clerks, armorers, weaponsmiths, and the like). Fort Silan is commanded by Grant Uilersson (LN male human Ftr4), while David the Bold (LG male human War5) oversees Fort Wheelan.

If the characters spend any time in either location, treat each fort as a village for the purposes of its gp limit and for determining the highest level of any commoners, experts, fighters, or warriors therein, but as a thorp for the purpose of determining all other NPC levels. The community demographics of each fort should match the area in which you place them (or simply assume a mixed racial demographic).

A Gather Information check (DC 15) reveals that the inhabitants of both forts are concerned about occasional fire giant raids from the mountains, but not yet so troubled as to hire anyone to stop them. A DC 25 check allows the PCs to learn that a large winged beast, perhaps a wyvern or dragon, has been spotted once or twice high above the mountains.

Since neither fort can supply the characters with much assistance, the topic of the nearest large city is likely to come up. Assume that the nearest settlement of significant size is the large city of Boucher's Crossing some fifty miles south of Fort Silan.

TRAVELING THROUGH THE WESTERN MOUNTAINS

As noted earlier, the adventure assumes that the party has access to powerful methods of determining the destination of their travels. If they need assistance, add an encounter with a helpful NPC or other local who can be persuaded to guide the PCs to the lair of the fire giants. When the characters find the crater used as a lair by the troublesome fire giants (and the dragon Flame), proceed to area **F1**, below.

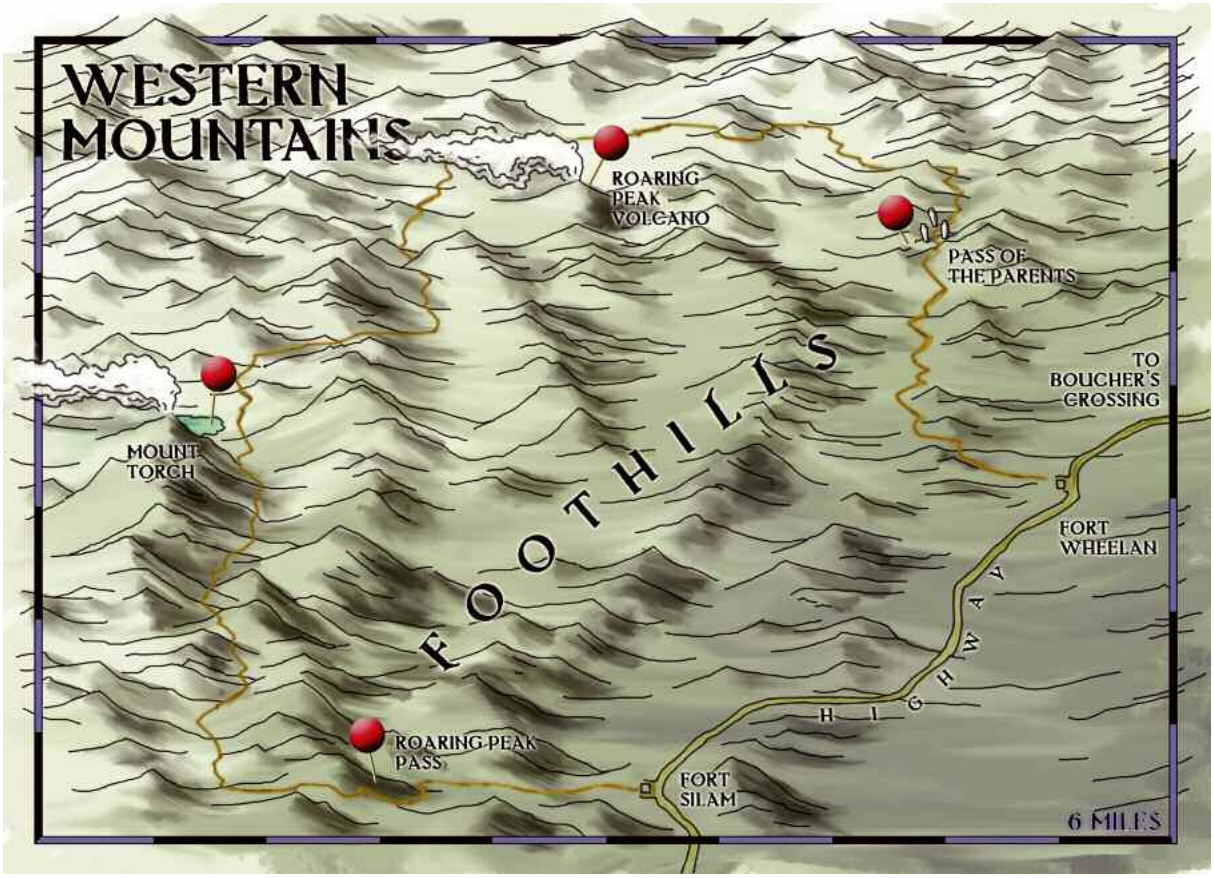
The trail between Roaring Peak Pass and the Pass of the Parents is reasonably clear, but overland movement is at three-quarters normal speed because of changes in altitude and frequent switchbacks (or one-half speed if off the trail). The adventure doesn't call for the characters to leave the trail until they reach the crater lake, but if they do, consult the Mountain Terrain section in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for details.

The high altitude of the Western Mountains can be fatiguing to creatures that aren't used to it. Any creature with a Climate/Terrain entry of mountain is considered acclimated to the high altitude, as are creatures who have lived in the area for at least a month (including all the monsters encountered in the adventure). The foothills and the trail aren't high enough to cause ill effects, but any character moving more than a mile off the trail quickly ascends to an area of thinner air. All nonacclimated creatures labor to breathe in the thin air at this altitude. Characters must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw each hour (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or be fatigued. The fatigue ends when the character descends to better air. Acclimated characters do not have to attempt the Fortitude save.

The *Dungeon Master's Guide* has more information on the effects of altitude and mountain travel.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

The Western Mountains are a dangerous area in which to travel without a large armed party. Every 4hours the PCs spend in the region, roll d% to determine if they have an encounter.



d%	Encounter	Avg. EL
01-60	None	n/a
61-65	Giant eagle* (1)	3
66-78	Patrol* (4d4 War1, 1d4 War2)	5
79-85	Dire bear (1d2)	7 or 9
86-90	Ettins (1d3+1)	8
91-95	Avalanche**	5
96-98	Fire giants (1d3+1)	11
99-00	Spectres (1d6+5)	13

*Will not attack unless threatened, and if approached peacefully may be able to share some tidbits about the area (see "The Western Mountains," above).

**See the Avalanches sidebar in Chapter 3 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for details. Treat as a CR 5 encounter.

F1. ENTRANCE (EL 12)

The rugged path up the mountain opens into a large crater filled by a lake. A black beach of volcanic sand extends across the south side of the lake, and a warm mist rises from the water's surface, making the area surprisingly humid.

This crater is the past and present home of the red dragon Flame. What strange force that led him back to his previous lair can only be guessed at, but one thing is for certain: he no longer lives here alone.

Creatures: Six Large hell hounds patrol the entrance to the crater, while a pair of ettin barbarians lurk just inside, one to either side of the entrance, their eyes trained on the sky.

Hell Hounds, Advanced (6): CR 6; Large Outsider (evil, extraplanar, fire, lawful); HD 8d8+24; hp 60 each; Init +5; Spd 40 ft.; AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 16; BAB +8; Grap +17; Atk/Full Atk +12 melee (2d6+7 plus 1d6 fire, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA breath weapon; SQ scent, fire subtype; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 21, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Skills: Hide +13, Jump +16, Listen +13, Move Silently +17, Spot +13, Survival +11*. *Feats:* Alertness, Improved Initiative, Run, Track.

Skills*: Hell hounds receive a +8 racial bonus to Survival checks when tracking by scent.

Breath Weapon (Su): Cone of fire, 30 ft., every 2d4 rounds; damage 2d6, Reflex half DC 17. The fiery breath also ignites any flammable materials within the cone.

Ettin Bbn4 (2): CR 9; Large Giant; HD 10d8+20 plus 4d12+8; hp 99 each; Init +3, Spd 35 ft.; AC 21, touch 8, flat-footed 21; BAB +11/+6/+1; Grap +22; Atk +19 melee (2d6+7, masterwork morningstar) or +9 ranged (1d8+7, javelin); Full Atk +19/+14/+9 melee (2d6+7, masterwork morningstar) and +19/+14/+9 melee (2d6+7, masterwork morningstar), or +9 ranged (1d8+7, javelin) and +9 ranged touch (tanglefoot bag); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA rage 2/day; SQ darkvision 90 ft., fast movement, superior two-weapon fighting, trap sense +1,

uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +13, Ref +3, Will +6; Str 24, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Skills: Climb +8*, Jump +8*, Listen +10, Search +1, Spot +10. *Feats:* Alertness, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (morningstar).

*Includes –3 armor check penalty.

Possessions: Large *+1 breastplate*, two masterwork morningstars, 4 javelins, 2 tanglefoot bags, *bead of force*.

Tactics: The hell hounds howl if they scent anything other than a giant or a dragon, alerting the ettins nearby. In combat, the ettins focus their attention on flying characters, attempting to bring them down with javelins and tanglefoot bags. Each also carries a single *bead of force* for use against particularly troublesome opponents.

Development: Each round of combat, there is a 25% chance that the commotion draws the attention of 1d3 draconic crocodiles from area **F3**, who arrive 1 round later. For every three crocodiles that show up, one draconic giant crocodile arrives as well. If at least half the crocodiles join the fray, the half-dragon giant crocodile from area **F2** appears 2 rounds later. The crocodiles have no allegiance to the ettins or other denizens of the crater, but prefer to take on smaller targets, preying opportunistically on characters who stray too close to the water's edge. Any crocodile reduced below half hit points flees back into the lake.

It's highly unlikely that Flame or any other denizens of area **F4** hear the combat due to the distance involved (Listen DC 40). However, if Flame hears a battle, he casts *invisibility* and moves to area **F4a** to view the scene, calling for two fire giants from area **F4c** to assist the guards if he believes it necessary. The giants arrive at **F4a** 2d4 rounds after being summoned by Flame. The dragon then falls back to **F4b** to prepare his defenses.

F2. UTHION'S TOWER (EL 9)

Through the mist you can see a ring of crumbling flagstones protruding from the water at an awkward angle. The structure, which extends about 5 feet above the water's surface, seems to be falling apart from age and abuse. The nearest point is roughly 80 feet from the shore, with no evidence of a bridge or causeway to provide access.

This 60-foot-wide structure was once the tower of a young wizard named Uthion. Flame killed him almost 150 years ago when he first settled in the area, using his great strength to topple the tower. After the giants moved in, they used the ruined tower for target practice with their boulders until the top half cracked off and sank into the lake.

Thanks to recent heavy rains, all three remaining floors of the tower are underwater. The top level, which can be accessed via the open top of the ruined tower, is divided into five wedge-shaped rooms once used as barracks and a meeting room. The furnishings have long since rotted away, although a Search check (DC 25) can turn up a silver candelabra (200 gp) underneath some muck.

A stone spiral staircase in the center of the tower allows characters to descend to the lower levels, although they must hold their breath unless they have some way to breathe water. The lower levels are also pitch black, requiring darkvision or magical light sources to see.

The middle surviving level is one large round room. A 15-foot-wide gap in the southwest corner allows access to the lake outside, the portcullis that once blocked the opening having long since rusted away. Characters investigating at the waterline notice the opening with a Spot check (DC 15).

The bottom level, which can be entered only by the central staircase, was once divided by iron bars into a half-dozen separate rooms (cells), but a century and a half of corrosion and the work of the crocodiles has turned the bars into mere stubs jutting from the floor and ceiling. Although the floor is covered in shattered and splintered bone fragments, nothing of value remains.

Creature: The spawn of Flame, a half-red dragon giant crocodile, uses the middle level as its home. The half-dragon is the unquestioned master of all crocodiles in the lake, as every single one is directly descended from it. Assuming it is still present (see area **F1**), the monster almost certainly hears any creatures investigating the upper level, but stealthy characters might be able to surprise it. When the half-dragon crocodile is present, 1d3 draconic crocodiles typically lurk here.

Draconic Crocodiles (1d3): CR 3; Medium Magical Beast; HD 3d10+12; hp 28 each; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15; BAB +3; Grap +8; Atk +8 melee (1d8+7, bite); Full Atk +8 melee (1d8+7, bite) and +3 melee (1d3+2, 2 claws), or +8 melee (1d12+7, tail slap); SA improved grab; SQ +4 saves vs. sleep and paralysis, low-light vision, darkvision 60 ft.; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 21, Dex 12, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 4.

Skills: Hide +7*, Listen +4, Spot +7, Swim +12. *Feats:* Alertness, Skill Focus (Hide).

See Appendix I for more information on the draconic creature template.

Half-red Dragon Giant Crocodile: Huge Dragon; CR 9; HD 14d12+84; hp 175; Init +1; Spd 20 ft, fly 40 ft. (average), swim 30 ft.; AC 20, touch 9, flat-footed 19; BAB +14; Grap +34; Atk +24 melee (2d8+18, bite); Full Atk +24 melee (2d8+18, bite) and +19 melee (2d8+12, 2 claws), or +24 melee (1d12+18, tail slap); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA breath weapon, improved grab; SQ darkvision 60 ft., hold breath, immunities, low-light vision; AL CE; SV Fort +15, Ref +10, Will +12; Str 35, Dex 12, Con 23, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 4.

Skills: Hide +8*, Listen +11, Spot +11, Swim +28. *Feats:* Alertness, Endurance, Flyby Attack, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Hide).

Breath Weapon (Su): 30-ft. cone of fire; 6d8 damage; Reflex DC 23 half.

Improved Grab (Ex): If the giant crocodile hits an opponent of up to Large size with its bite attack, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it gets a hold, the crocodile grabs the opponent with its mouth and heads for deep water.

Immunities (Ex): Immune to fire, paralysis, and sleep.

Skills*: +4 racial bonus to Hide checks in water. The bonus increases to +10 if only its eyes show; this also gives it cover.

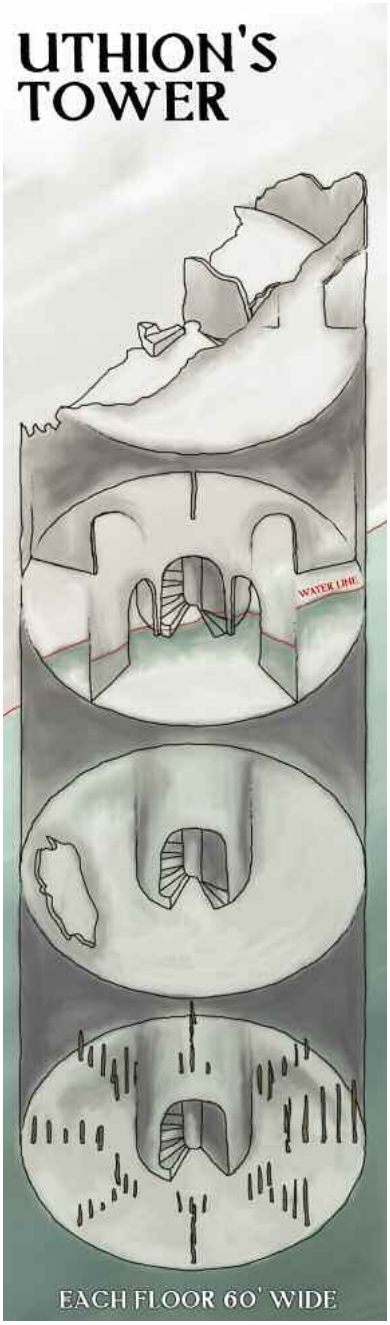
Tactics: When facing foes outside its watery environment, the half-dragon enjoys springing out of the water with its powerful wings, using Flyby Attack to grapple a nearby or low-flying target and heading back into the water. Failing that, it softens up a target with its breath weapon before closing in for the kill.

In the water, the half-dragon can still use Flyby Attack, although it can't rely on drowning its target by heading for deep water. Instead, it grapples and then crushes a target to death with its powerful jaws.

Treasure: While the half-dragon doesn't specifically collect treasure, a few baubles from previous victims lie around the middle level of the tower. These can be found with 10 minutes of work and a Search check (DC 20), and include a rotting leather pouch with 27 pp, a tarnished silver bracelet (110 gp), and a *ring of swimming*.

Development: A fight here draws 25% of the remaining crocodiles and giant crocodiles every 1d3 rounds until the entire population of the lake has arrived.

The sound of combat from area **F1** might draw the half-dragon from its lair. If reduced to half hit points, it retreats to this area once again.



Persistent characters can discover the remaining portion of the tower (consisting of the upper four levels) near the center of the lake, lying on its side where it rolled from the rest of the tower. This portion is in even worse shape than the submerged levels, having endured years of hurled boulders from the ledges above before toppling. Nothing of value exists within, but determining this requires a full 8 man-hours of searching. Characters who spend any significant time investigating have a 25% chance per hour to encounter 1d3 crocodiles or one giant crocodile (equal chance of either), assuming any remain in the lake. Also, unless the characters are particularly circumspect in their search, their work is likely to draw the attention of the denizens of area **F4**.

F3. CRATER LAKE (EL 10)

The misty blue lake fills most of the crater, its still waters exuding a palpable warmth. Around the edge of the lake to the west the black beach leads to a path that rises along the inner wall of the crater, although the vapors prevent you from seeing where it leads.

This brilliant blue freshwater lake was formed long ago by hot water that forced its way to the surface through lava vents. From the shore, the lake gently slopes away to a depth of about 30 feet over much of its area, dropping away to as much as 90 feet in a couple places. The water is surprisingly warm, thanks to the lava vent at area **F5**.

Nearly two centuries ago, the lake was stocked with many crocodiles (normal and giant) by Uthion, the wizard who then lived in the now-ruined tower (area **F2**). Seeing no reason to depopulate the lake (and remove a potential defense, Flame left the crocodiles alone, with one significant exception. One night about thirty years ago, after consuming an entire wagon of strong dwarven ale, the dragon *polymorphed* into a giant crocodile and frolicked with the denizens of the lake. By morning, Flame had forgotten all about the night before—but one particular female giant crocodile hadn't.

Creatures: Over the intervening years, Flame's half-dragon spawn (see area **F2**) has slowly eliminated all competitors to his leadership of the group. Now, that half-dragon and its offspring—crimson-scaled draconic crocodiles and giant crocodiles—rule the lake.

Draconic Crocodiles (12): hp 22 each; see area **F2** for complete statistics.

Draconic Giant Crocodiles (4): CR 5; Huge Magical Beast; HD 7d10+35; hp 63 each; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 16; BAB +7; Grap +24; Atk +14 melee (2d8+13, bite); Full Atk +14 melee (2d8+13, bite) and +9 melee (1d6+4, two claws), or +14 melee (1d12+13, tail slap); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA improved grab; SQ +4 saves vs. sleep and paralysis, low-light vision, darkvision 60 ft.; AL N; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 29, Dex 12, Con 21, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 4.

Skills: Hide +1*, Listen +5, Spot +7, Swim +16. *Feats:* Alertness, Endurance, Skill Focus (Hide).

Skills*: +4 racial bonus to Hide checks in water. The bonus increases to +10 if only its eyes show; this also gives it cover.

Tactics: The crocodiles prefer to prey on targets in or near the water, using their Improved Grab to grapple opponents and drag them into the deep water of the lake. Despite the bloodline they share with Flame, the crocodiles aren't the servants of the dragon, and won't risk themselves to protect the area. Any crocodile reduced below half normal hit points is most likely to flee to deep water.

Treasure: The northwest corner of the lake, beneath the entrance to Flame's lair, is the deepest spot. There, a full 90 feet below the surface, is a small pile of treasure—various trinkets and items dropped or scattered by Flame during his first stay in the region. The treasure includes 4,476 cp, 403 sp, 156 gp, 67 pp, six gems (100 gp, 134 gp, 200 gp, 500 gp, 500 gp, and 2,000 gp), a small ivory statue of a unicorn (100 gp), and a *ring of warmth*. Most of the treasure is buried in the lake-bed, but with 15 minutes of searching and a Search check (DC 15), a character can dig up 25% of the treasure. Assuming successful checks, a single character can recover the entire stash in about an hour.

Development: The crocodiles may be drawn to the sounds of battle in area **F1** (see that area for details).

F4. FLAME'S LAIR

The past and present home of the dragon Flame, this network of caves can prove deadly even to a well-prepared group of adventurers. The monsters can back each other up easily, and the terrain and layout favors the inhabitants over intruders. An unlucky or unprepared party may well have to fall back and return later.

F4A. WESTERN LAIR ENTRANCE (EL 11)

A great hole gapes in the side of the cliff face, the opening of a black stone passage that leads into darkness.

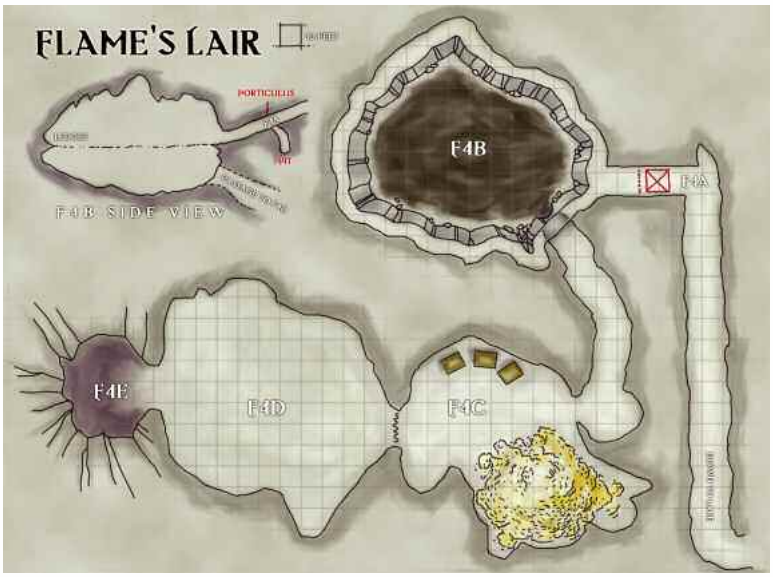
The entrance is a full 30 feet tall and 20 feet wide, allowing even the massive fire giants to walk two abreast. Twice each day, Flame casts an *alarm* spell at the entrance (duration 14 hours apiece). Any Tiny or larger creature coming within 20 feet of the entrance triggers the mental alarm, alerting Flame to intruders.

Trap: The hall has a pair of linked traps, built by deep gnome captives during Flame's first habitation of the area and restored and improved upon by the fire giants since their arrival. Unless the locking mechanism in area **F4b** is activated (see below), any weight of 30 pounds or more applied in the shaded area of the hallway triggers the traps.

When the trap springs, a portcullis falls along the border between the shaded area and the trapdoor (marked with an "X"). The character triggering the trap is attacked by the falling portcullis. Any character adjacent to this area who wishes to leap to the opposite side of the portcullis before it drops may attempt a Reflex save (DC 20). Failure means the character remains where he is; failure by 5 or more means the character is also attacked by the enormous sharpened gate as it falls. If the portcullis hits the ground, it locks in place, requiring a Strength check (DC 25) to lift. If a character is pinned beneath, the portcullis can't lock in place, and the Strength check to lift it is only DC 20. The bars are set close together, but a Small character could slip through with an Escape Artist check (DC 25).

As the portcullis finishes its drop, the area of the floor marked with an "X" falls away, dropping characters in that area into a pit. Since this trapdoor is perfectly safe until the portcullis drops, it is particularly hard to find. Characters who fail the save tumble down a steep slope and then drop 10 feet into a pool of bubbling hot tar. The fall deals only 1d6 points of damage, but immersion in the hot tar deals 8d6 points of damage each round. Also, any character immersed in tar sinks unless he makes a Swim check (DC 10) each round to stay above the surface. Failure by 5 or more indicates that the character sinks below the surface and begins to drown (see the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). Even after leaving the tar pit, any character covered in tar suffers 4d6 points of fire damage each round for 1d3 rounds.

Portcullis Trap: CR 8; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; hidden switch bypass (in area 5b); Atk +15 melee (6d6 damage/×3 crit, portcullis); Search (DC 35); Disable Device (DC 35). Portcullis blocks passageway and may trap characters underneath.



Tar Pit Trap: CR 10; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Reflex (DC 25) avoids; 10-ft. fall (1d6, fall, plus 8d6 fire damage from hot tar); Search (DC 40); Disable Device (DC 35).

Development: The loud clang of the portcullis falling can easily be heard in area **F4b** (Listen DC 0) or **F4c** (DC 15) unless silenced somehow. If the trap is triggered, Flame's attention is almost certainly drawn by intruders.

F4B. MAIN CHAMBER (EL 12 OR 15)

The black walls of this chamber are polished smooth in many places by the application of great heat. Without much in the way of handholds, these walls are difficult to climb (DC 25), except for a spot just above the passage to **F4c**, where a few widely spaced handholds allow a Large creature (such as a fire giant) to climb more easily (DC 15). A 10-foot-wide ledge runs around the entire room.

The floor of this chamber, 30 feet below the ledge, is covered in bubbling hot tar to a depth of 2 feet. Any character who comes in contact with the tar suffers 1d6 points of fire damage, or 8d6 points if fully immersed. Unlike the tar pit at area **F4a**, there is very little risk of drowning here, although the other effects of immersion in hot tar apply. A 20-foot-wide, 20-foot-high passage slopes gently up from the southeast corner out of the tar and toward area **F4c**.

A lever that locks the portcullis/tar pit trap in area **F4a** is set into the eastern wall, about 10 feet below the ledge. Even if the characters manage to reach the lever (a tricky task, given its position), moving it requires a Strength check (DC 20).

Creatures: Two fire giants stand guard here—just inside the hallway from area **F4a** and out of sight to either side. A pair of Large hell hounds pace around the ledge. Unless the characters have managed to bypass the guards at area **F1**, the *alarm* spell at the entrance, and the traps at area **F4a**, Flame is well aware of their intrusion and has moved from **F4c** to **F4b** to receive them.

Hell Hounds, Advanced (2): hp 60 each; see area **F1** for complete statistics.

Fire Giants (2): hp 142, 149; *Monster Manual* 121.

Flame, Adult Red Dragon: CR 14; Huge Dragon (fire); HD 22d12+110; hp 253; Init +4; Spd 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor); AC 34, touch 13, flat-footed 34; BAB +22; Grap +41; Atk +31 melee (2d8+11, bite); Full Atk +31 melee (2d8+11, bite) and +31 melee (2d6+5, 2 claws) and +31 melee (1d8+5, 2 wings) and +31 melee (2d6+16, tail slap); SA breath weapon, crush, spells; SQ blindsense, DR 10/magic, fire subtype, immunities, keen senses, *locate object*, scent; SR 23; AL CE; SV Fort +18, Ref +13, Will +17; Str 33, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 16, Wis 19, Cha 16.

Skills: Appraise +15, Bluff +28, Concentration +19, Diplomacy +22, Intimidate +30, Jump +22, Knowledge (arcana) +22, Knowledge (history) +22, Listen +29, Search +18,

Sense Motive +24, Spot +29. *Feats:* Blind-Fight, Cleave, Clinging Breath*, Improved Initiative, Improved Multiattack*, Large and In Charge*, Multiattack, Power Attack.

*New feat; see the sidebar on page 32.

Breath Weapon (Su): 50-ft. cone of fire; 12d10 damage (Reflex save DC 25 half).

Crush (Ex): A flying or leaping dragon can land on opponents of up to Small size as a standard action, using its whole body to crush them. A crush attack affects as many creatures as can fit under the dragon's body. Creatures in the affected area must succeed at a Reflex save (DC 25) or be pinned, automatically taking bludgeoning damage during the next round unless the dragon moves off them. If the dragon chooses to maintain the pin, treat it as a normal grapple attack. Pinned opponents take 2d8+16 points of damage each round if they don't escape.

Frightful Presence (Ex): 180-ft. radius; creatures up to 4 HD panicked 4d6 rounds, creatures with 5 to 21 HD shaken 4d6 rounds; Will save (DC 24) negates.

Immunities (Ex): Immune to fire, paralysis, and sleep.

Locate Object (Sp): 6/day, as the spell.

Spells Known (6/7/7/5; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*arcane mark, dancing lights, detect magic, ghost sound, light, mending, read magic*; 1st—*alarm, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield, unseen servant*; 2nd—*detect thoughts, invisibility, resist energy*; 3rd—*haste, slow.* Flame casts spells as a 7th-level sorcerer.

Possessions: Most of Flame's horde is stored in area **F4c**. He wears a *ring of protection +5* and carries a *wand of mirror image* (16 charges) wedged between two scales at his right side. Embedded in his underbelly are seventeen various gems (100 gp each).

Tactics: The hell hounds and giants remain in this chamber unless Flame directs them toward **F4a**. If facing opponents here, the giants hurl rocks at airborne foes or move into melee with landbound enemies. The hell hounds are opportunistic fighters, attempting to flank characters fighting on the ledge.

Ad-hoc XP Award: Add 10% to the XP reward for any creatures defeated in this area, due to the difficult terrain.

F4C. FLAME'S BEDCHAMBER (EL 7 OR EL 14)

Creatures: A pair of Large hell hounds rests in the side niche just outside this chamber. Their scent allows them to detect any creatures passing by, and they howl a warning if anything other than a giant or dragon comes near.

Although Flame spends most of his time in this chamber, when the characters arrive he is most likely found in area **F4b**.

Hell Hounds, Advanced (2): hp 60 each; see area **F1** for complete statistics.

Development: If Flame retreats here, he spends a full-round action pushing a massive boulder into the room's entrance. Moving the boulder requires a Strength check (DC 26).

Treasure: Flame keeps his hoard in this room, scattered as piles of treasure in the southern half of the chamber.

When resting, Flame reclines upon a great pile of copper and silver coins (totaling 42,712 cp and 82,479 sp). Buried in this pile (Search DC 25 to find, unless the PCs actually collect all the coins) is a slightly dented, but still intact, silver helm of dwarven make set with tiny amethysts (100 gp).

Three heavy wooden chests sit at the opposite end of the chamber from the pile of coins. Claw marks gouged into the chests reveal that Flame uses the chests as a footrest when reclining. Each unlocked chest holds 2,000 gp.

A large burlap sack spills gold coins (a total of 822 gp) from its split seams where a jeweled dagger (110 gp) has been thrust into it. An identical dagger (110 gp) is wedged into the rock wall about 5 feet above the sack.

A marble basin (300 gp) lies along one wall, filled with 3,121 gp. A polished darkwood staff wrapped in gold wire and set with a black star sapphire (4,000 gp) pokes up from the coins. Also among the gold coins are a dozen matched bloodstones (100 gp each) and a *potion of cure moderate wounds.*

A dented heavy steel shield, bearing the emblem of a hammer and anvil, hangs near the archway between **F4c** and **F4d**, where it serves as a target for thrown rocks. An intact suit of masterwork full plate armor bearing the same emblem lies nearby, the charred skeleton of its dwarven wearer still within.

A once-fine teak coffer lies on its side, covered with scratches that render it valueless. Inside are two items, a Small *+2 mithral breastplate* painted leaf-green and a Small ceremonial heavy mace (600 gp). A lead-lined secret compartment within the coffer (Search DC 30 to find) conceals a 1-ounce vial of *stone salve.*

An empty wine barrel holds 810 pp. Lying atop the coins is a steel scroll tube holding two scrolls: an arcane scroll of *detect secret doors, identify,* and *knock*; and a divine scroll of *invisibility to undead, lesser restoration,* and *invisibility purge.* Mixed in with the coins are three small sapphires (700 gp each) and a *potion of darkvision.*

A human skull sits atop a pile of exactly 100 pp, with a *+2 keen kama* piercing its crown. The skull still wears a gold circlet set with green garnets (1,000 gp), and an emerald (1,000 gp each) has been placed in each eyesocket. A small leather pouch under the skull holds 8 golden pearls (100 gp each).

Finally, a *ring of minor fire resistance* dangles from an exquisitely wrought platinum chain (1,000 gp), which in turn hangs from a rocky outcropping 30 feet above the floor (Spot DC 22 to notice it). Even a character using *detect magic* to search for magic treasure is likely to miss this item unless she specifically directs the spell upward.

F4D. WARBAND'S QUARTERS (EL 14)

A great curtain crudely stitched from the hides of several dire bears separates this chamber from area **F4c**.

Creatures: This large chamber serves as living quarters for the warband. Although the room holds bunks for nine giants (apparently constructed from the remnants of an old sailing ship), currently only two fire giants rest here, along with Flame's scion, a half-red dragon fire giant named Pyrathax. Pyrathax's pet, a Nessian warhound that serves as packleader to the rest of the hell hounds, also lives here with the giants.

Tactics: If not alerted to the character's intrusion, the two giants and Pyrathax are sleeping in chain shirts (reduce AC to

20). Given sufficient warning, they don their half-plate armor and stand ready to join Flame if called upon.

If attacked, the giants defend themselves while calling for assistance from the inhabitants of area **F4c** and **F4e**.

Nessian Warhound: hp 114; *Monster Manual* 152.

Fire Giants (2): hp 144, 136; *Monster Manual* 121.

Pyrathax, Male Half-red Dragon Fire Giant: Large Dragon (fire); CR 12; HD 15d12+90; hp 187; Init –1; Spd 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (average); AC 29, touch 8, flat-footed 29; BAB +15; Grap +33; Atk +29 melee (3d6+22 plus 1d6 cold, Large *+1 frost greatsword*); Full Atk +29/+24/+19 melee (3d6+22 plus 1d6 cold, Large *+1 frost greatsword*) and +23 melee (1d8+7, bite); SA breath weapon, rock throwing; SQ immunities, rock catching, fire subtype; AL CE; SV Fort +15, Ref +4, Will +11; Str 39, Dex 9, Con 23, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 13.

Skills: Climb +27*, Craft (weaponsmithing) +19, Diplomacy +6, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Listen +6, Jump +27*, Search +5, Spot +20. *Feats:* Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Power Attack.

*Includes –5 armor check penalty.

Breath Weapon (Su): 30-ft. cone of fire; 6d8 damage, Reflex half (DC 23).

Immunities (Ex): Immune to fire, paralysis, and sleep.

Possessions: Large *+1 full plate armor*, Large *+1 frost greatsword*, platinum bracer (280 gp).

F4e. Volcanic Vent

This area is normally shrouded in shadow at all times, thanks to its inhabitant's *darkness* spell-like ability. All creatures in the area have concealment (20% miss chance) unless the *darkness* is banished with a *daylight* spell or the like.

Creature: Kryllia, a 4th-level ogre mage sorcerer, once served as the consort and chief advisor to the leader of the warband, and secretly aspired to taking control of the group. That changed when Flame arrived. At first, Kryllia thought she could assume a similar position, but the dragon's chaotic nature soon led to conflict between the two. Since that time, Kryllia has seen her influence among the other giants diminish. Now, she lives a largely solitary existence, guarding the rear exit of the cavern. Still, she dreams of reclaiming a position of power, perhaps even leading the giants should something happen to Flame. Of course, the wily ogre mage wouldn't dream of openly opposing the dragon, but she might just withhold assistance at a crucial juncture if defeat appears imminent, particularly if she could swoop down after Flame's death to defeat the dragon's slayers and prove herself to the other giants.

Kryllia, Female Ogre Mage Sor4: CR 12; Large Giant; HD 5d8+15 plus 4d4+12; hp 58; Init +4; Spd 40 ft., fly 40 ft. (good); AC 21, touch 9, flat-footed 21; BAB +5; Grap +14; Atk/Full Atk +10 melee (3d6+8, Large *+1 greatsword*); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA spell-like abilities, spells; SQ darkvision 90 ft., regeneration 2; SR 19; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +7; Str 21, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 20.

Skills: Concentration +15, Disguise +7, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Listen +10, Spellcraft +10, Spot +10. *Feats:* Combat Expertise, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*darkness* and *invisibility*; 1/day—*charm person* (DC 16), *cone of cold* (DC 20), *gaseous form*, *polymorph*, and *sleep* (DC 16). Caster level 9th.

Spells Known (6/8/4; base save DC = 15 + spell level): 0—*arcane mark*, *detect magic*, *flare*, *light*, *mage hand*, *read magic*; 1st—*grease*, *true strike*, *ventriloquism*; 2nd—*blur*.

Possessions: Large half-plate armor, Large *+1 greatsword*, *circlet of Charisma +2*, gold bracelet (300 gp).

Tactics: The ogre mage's primary duty is to prevent intruders from gaining entry through the volcanic vent. If she notices anyone investigating the dilapidated roc's nest at the top of the vent, she turns invisible and flies up to check out the disturbance. While invisible, she employs *darkness*, *grease*, and *ventriloquism* to mislead and otherwise annoy foes. If she believes herself outmatched, she retreats back down the vent to warn the occupants of areas **F4c** and **F4d**.

If Kryllia hears combat in the main area of the lair (Listen, DC 15 for area **F4d** or DC 35 for area **F4b**), she *polymorphs* into the form of a male fire giant before entering combat (Spot DC 26 to notice the disguise), hoping to appear no different than the other denizens of the area. After approaching a weak-looking opponent invisibly, she uses *true strike* and Power Attack to set up a deadly ambush, retreating again with *invisibility*. If she finds herself unable to avoid melee combat with a competent foe, she uses *blur* to aid her defenses, unleashing *cone of cold* only as a last resort.

Because of her half-plate armor—the better to blend in with the other giants while *polymorphed*—some of Kryllia's spells (*arcane mark*, *detect magic*, *grease*, *mage hand*, and *read magic*) suffer a 40% arcane spell failure chance. The rest don't have somatic components and thus have no chance of failure.

Treasure: In addition to the items listed under Kryllia's possessions, she keeps a stash of treasure hidden under a large rock (Search DC 20 to find, and Strength DC 15 to uncover). This horde consists of 1,300 gp and 4 black pearls (700 gp each).

F5. Hot Springs (EL Varies)

An ancient lava vent provides the heat source for the lake. The magma below superheats the water, driving it up through the vent to keep the lake comfortably warm.

Creature: At any given time, 1d3 draconic crocodiles lounge here, enjoying the warmer area of the lake. If the characters have already defeated all of the draconic crocodiles in the lake, this area is empty.

Draconic Crocodiles (1d3): hp 22 each; see area **F2** for complete statistics.

Conclusion

If the adventurers manage to end the twin threats of the kobold dragon cult and the Flame-led fire giants, they should be rightly proud of their accomplishments. But even an efficient group is likely to leave loose ends that might come back to haunt them later.

If any kobolds escaped the Sunken Caverns, they are furious with the PCs. Too cowardly for a fair fight, the characters might have to endure a long string of annoying (and cruel) pranks, traps, and ambushes unless they actively track down the culprits.

Who knows what other scions of Flame might exist in other areas? If one of these creatures heard that its father had returned, it might seek him out, whether for an alliance, a showdown, or even just a conversation. Such creatures aren't likely to look kindly on anyone knocking off "dear old Dad."

The githyanki who cloned Flame could visit the crater lake to check on his old friend. If he finds evidence of foul play, he might well seek vengeance on the PCs. This could even lead the PCs on a trip to the Astral Plane to deal with their foe face-to-face.

Andy Collins co-designed the upcoming Draconomicon, *and recently served as lead developer on the* Revised Player's Handbook. *He reckons that he spends more time thinking about D&D than would be considered healthy. Catch up withhis latest thoughts over at* www.andycollins.net.

APPENDIX I

DRACONIC CREATURE (TEMPLATE)

This template originally appeared in *Dragon Magazine* #301.

Draconic creatures are descended from a dragon ancestor, though that ancestor may be many generations removed.

Draconic creatures often bear hints of their heritage, such as slit pupils or talonlike nails. They are sometimes mistaken for half-dragons.

It isn't necessary to determine the source of a draconic creature's heritage (unlike with half-dragons), since the creature doesn't gain any abilities directly related to its dragon ancestor (such as a resistance to a certain type of energy).

CREATING A DRACONIC CREATURE

"Draconic" is a template that can be added to any living corporeal creature (referred to hereafter as the "base creature") except dragons. Animals with this template become magical beasts, but otherwise the creature type is unchanged.

A draconic creature uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Armor Class: Natural armor improves by +1.

Damage: Draconic creatures have claw attacks. If the base creature does not have these attack forms, use the damage values in the table below. Otherwise, use the values below or the base creature's damage, whichever is greater.

Size	Claw Damage
Up to Tiny	1
Small	1d2
Medium	1d3
Large	1d4
Huge	1d6
Gargantuan	1d8
Colossal	1d10

Special Qualities: A draconic creature has all the special qualities of the base creature, plus low-light vision and darkvision with a range of 60 feet.

Saves: A draconic creature gains a +4 racial bonus on saves against sleep and paralysis, thanks to its heritage.

Abilities: Increase from the base creature as follows: Str +2, Dex +0, Con +2, Int +0, Wis +0, Cha +2.

Skills: Draconic creatures gain a +2 racial bonus on Intimidate and Spot checks.

Organization: Solitary or as part of base creature's organization

Challenge Rating: As base creature +1

Level Adjustment: As base creature +1

DRACONIC CHARACTERS

Draconic creatures with a Charisma of 12 or higher who are capable of gaining levels are often sorcerers. Draconic characters have a level adjustment of +1.

SKELETAL DRAGON (TEMPLATE)

Skeletal dragons are created via the *animate dead* spell and function as normal skeletons in most ways, though they retain a few of their draconic abilities and qualities even after death. Despite their loss of sentience, the pinpoints of red light smoldering in their eyesockets betray the spark of unlife that still exists.

Much like typical skeletons, skeletal dragons do only what they are ordered to do. They can draw no conclusions of their own and take no initiative. Necromancers particularly prize skeletal dragons, as they make formidable guardians. They are sturdier than a typical skeleton of their size, and their added qualities strike terror into would-be intruders.

Powerful draconic spellcasters have even been known to animate the skeletons of their fallen rivals or, in the case of particularly vile dragons, family members who have passed away.

CREATING A SKELETAL DRAGON

"Skeletal" is a template that can be applied to any dragon (referred to hereafter as the "base dragon.") The dragon's type changes to "undead," and it loses any subtypes it had in life. It uses all the base dragon's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Hit Dice: The base dragon's hit dice remain the same, but it loses any Constitution bonus to its hit points (see Abilities, below). However, a skeletal dragon gains bonus hit points equal to its HD.

Speed: The base dragon retains its ground speed, but loses fly or swim speeds. If it had a burrow or climb speed, it retains that as well.

AC: Replace the base dragon's existing natural armor bonus to AC with a new natural armor bonus based on its size.

Size	Natural Armor
Up to Tiny	+0
Small	+1
Medium-size	+2
Large	+3
Huge	+4
Gargantuan	+6
Colossal	+10

Attacks: As base dragon, except that skeletal dragons cannot make effective crush attacks.

Special Attacks: A skeletal dragon loses all supernatural and spell-like special attacks possessed by the base dragon. It retains any exceptional special attacks (such as frightful presence or improved grab).

Special Qualities: A skeletal dragon loses all supernatural and spell-like special qualities possessed by the base dragon. It retains any exceptional special qualities (such as immunities or blindsight). It loses any subtypes it had, though if the base dragon had any immunities based on its subtype (such as the Fire subtype), it keeps those immunities despite losing the subtype. It also gains additional special qualities as listed below.

Immunities (Ex): Skeletal dragons have cold immunity. Because they lack flesh or internal organs, they take only half damage from piercing or slashing weapons.

Undead Traits: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, and disease. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Saves: As base dragon. As undead, skeletal dragons are immune to anything that requires a Fortitude save unless it affects objects.

Abilities: The skeletal dragon retains the base dragon's Strength, Dexterity, and Charisma scores. Being undead, the skeletal dragon has no Constitution score. It also has no Intelligence score. Its Wisdom becomes 10 (regardless of the base dragon's Wisdom).

Skills: The skeletal dragon loses all skill ranks and racial skill bonuses possessed by the base dragon.

Feats: The skeletal dragon loses all feats possessed by the base dragon. It gains Improved Initiative as a bonus feat.

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Any

Challenge Rating: Base dragon's CR divided by 2 (minimum 1)

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: Up to +2 HD

APPENDIX II

DRACOLYTE

It's a rare non-dragon that takes up worship of the draconic gods. The dracolyte is the most dedicated of these rare individuals, a divine spellcaster who devotes his energy and support to the deities of dragonkind. As the dracolyte gains power and prestige, he receives abilities associated with the dragons themselves.

Clerics and druids are the most common dracolytes. Some paladins and rangers, particularly those with metallic dragon allies, enter this prestige class. Other classes don't generally have the religious bent to pursue this path.

Dracolytes often congregate with others who share their respect and faith. They tend to be outsiders in most cultures, except those with innate respect in dragonkind (such as

kobolds, lizardfolk, and troglodytes).

This sidebar presents a reduced (5-level) version of the dracolyte prestige class. For a full 10-level version of the class, see the *Draconomicon*.

Hit Die: d8.

Table 1–1: The Dracolyte

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spellcasting
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	Prestige domain	+1 level of existing class
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3		+1 level of existing class
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+3	Alertness	+1 level of existing class
4th	+3	+4	+1	+4		+1 level of existing class
5th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Foster dragon	+1 level of existing class

Requirements

To qualify to become a dracolyte, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Any non-dragon.

Feats: Dragonfriend or Dragonthrall, Toughness.

Skills: Concentration 8 ranks, Diplomacy 4 ranks, Knowledge (arcana) 4 ranks, Knowledge (religion) 8 ranks.

Languages: Draconic.

Spellcasting: Able to cast 2nd-level divine spells.

Class Skills

The dracolyte's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Jump (Str), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), and Spellcraft (Int). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the dracolyte prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Dracolytes gain no proficiency with any weapons, armor, or shields.

Spellcasting: A dracolyte continues training in divine magic. Thus, when a new dracolyte level is gained, the character gains new spells per day as if he had also gained a level in a divine spellcasting class he belonged to before he added the prestige class. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (improved chance of controlling or rebuking undead, and so on). This essentially means that he adds the level of dracolyte of the draconic mysteries to the level of some other spellcasting class the character has, then determines spells per day and caster level accordingly.

Prestige Domain (Ex): At 1st level, the dracolyte gains access to a prestige domain based on his alignment. Good-aligned dracolytes (and neutral clerics who channel positive energy) gain access to the Glory prestige domain (and its domain power), while evil-aligned dracolytes (and neutral clerics who channel negative energy) gain access to the Domination prestige domain (and its domain power). Dracolytes who are neither good nor evil (and who don't channel positive or negative energy) can select either of these domains, but once made, the choice can never be altered.

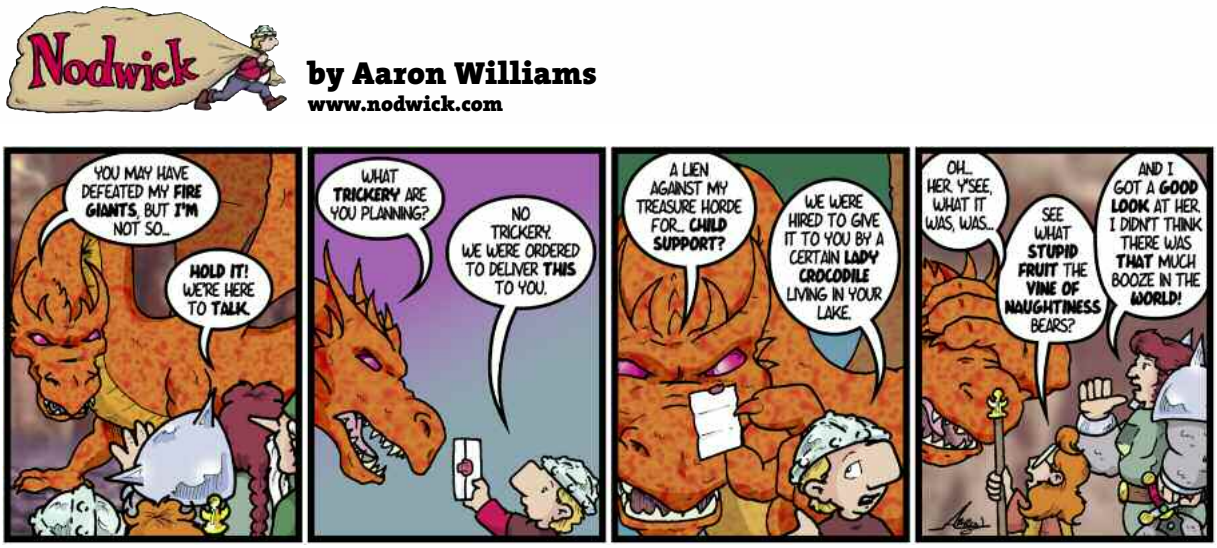
The domain spells can be chosen as daily domain spells. If this is the character's only domain, he gains the ability to cast a domain spell of each spell level to which he has access once per day, in addition to those spells he already casts.

Prestige domains are presented and explained in the Spells section, earlier in this chapter.

Alertness: At 3rd level, the dracolyte gains the Alertness feat for free.

Foster Dragon: At 5th level, the dracolyte is entrusted with the care of a wyrmling dragon. The type is up to the DM, but the dragon's alignment should match the dracolyte's. The wyrmling dragon follows the dracolyte loyally, and will even accompany it on adventures (though it receives no XP and can't gain levels).

If the wyrmling dragon dies, the dracolyte cannot gain any additional dracolyte levels until he receives an *atonement* from another dracolyte or a cleric who worships a draconic deity. Ω


Nodwick
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YOU MAY HAVE DEFEATED MY FIRE GIANTS, BUT I'M NOT SO...
HOLD IT! WE'RE HERE TO TALK.
WHAT TRICKERY ARE YOU PLANNING?
NO TRICKERY. WE WERE ORDERED TO DELIVER THIS TO YOU.
A LIEN AGAINST MY TREASURE HORDE FOR... CHILD SUPPORT?
WE WERE HIRED TO GIVE IT TO YOU BY A CERTAIN LADY CROCODILE LIVING IN YOUR LAKE.
OH... HER Y'SEE, WHAT IT WAS, WAS...
SEE WHAT STUPID FRUIT THE VINE OF NAUGHTINESS BEARS?
AND I GOT A GOOD LOOK AT HER. I DIDN'T THINK THERE WAS THAT MUCH BOOZE IN THE WORLD!

HELPFUL NPCS, WOULD-BE COHORTS, AND UNIQUE SIDEKICKS

AGENTS AND ALLIES

BY PETER ADKISON
ARTWORK BY TOM FOWLER

Lone Tooth, Male Dire Lion Mnk12: CR 14; Large Magical Beast; HD 12d8+48; hp 112; Init +4; Spd 40 ft.; AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 13; BAB +9/+4; Grap +23; Atk +19 melee (3d8+16/19–20, claw) or +19 melee (1d8+16, bite); Full Atk +19/+14 melee (3d8+11/19–20, claws) and +14 melee (1d8+6, bite), or +19/+19/+19/+14 melee (3d8+11/19–20, flurry of blows) and +14 melee (1d8+6, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA greater flurry, improved grab, *ki* strike (lawful, magic), pounce, rake 3d8+5, unarmed strike; SQ abundant step, diamond body, improved evasion, low-light vision, purity of body, scent, slow fall 60 ft., still mind, wholeness of body; AL LN; SV Fort +12, Ref +12, Will +13; Str 31, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 20, Cha 8.

Skills: Hide +15, Jump +25, Listen +20, Move Silently +19, Tumble +19. *Feats:* Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Trip, Mobility, Multiattack, Spring Attack, Stunning Fist.

Possessions: Amulet of mighty fists +1, bracers of ogre power +2, monk's belt (worn as rope collar), *periapt of Wisdom +2.*

Required Leadership Score: 20

Preferred Leader Class: Cleric, druid, monk, paladin

Preferred Leader Alignment: LG, LN, N

LONE TOOTH

While many monks rely greatly on speed when fighting, Barath always relied more on strength. The ways of the Sacred Order of Man-Beasts (see the issue #100 Web enhancement for more information on the order) came naturally to Barath, or Lone Tooth as he is called after enduring the transition from a human to a dire lion. Strong as an ox and quietly contemplative, Barath enjoyed a solitary life in the wilderness, and the transition to dire animal form was an easy one for him.

Lone Tooth has seen the evils that his order opposes. Vast cities filled with stench, filled with those who have no love for the earth and would spread the vile diseases of corruption and greed if left unchecked. While Lone Tooth understands that many individuals within society are often fine, virtuous folk, when banded together their cause of advancing "civilization" will eventually spell doom for all he holds dear.

Lone Tooth is devoutly loyal to his order and his cause. He is a loner, for he trusts only other entities of the forest. As a dire lion, he wanders his lands and sees to it that those who would ravish it are "persuaded" to do otherwise. Lone Tooth knows every animal and every plant in his demesne and cautiously takes note of any disturbances, interfering if necessary.

TACTICS

Surprise is Lone Tooth's best ally. He tries to avoid being identified as anything other than a "typical" dire lion, concealing his magic items beneath his thick fur (Spot DC 25 to notice one). He lives in a concealed cave next to an old woodsman's cabin in the hopes of deluding intruders into thinking he might be the companion of a powerful druid or ranger.

If Lone Tooth believes combat is his only option, he lets opponents track him to a location of his choice with a good escape route. Once battle seems imminent, Lone Tooth allows his enemies to prepare their defenses. Then he leaves, leading them to another ambush point of his choosing. This frustrating tactic is repeated until Lone Tooth feels that many of his enemies' resources have been expended. Then he launches his attack. In combat, Lone Tooth uses his Spring Attack feat to pick off spellcasters first. He also favors using pounce to move and get a full round of attacks on an opponent. If he kills someone, he runs off with the body and takes it to the order for *reincarnation*, as well as to receive healing himself before returning.

DEVELOPMENT

The PCs enter Lone Tooth's jungle at the behest of a group of foresters who have been attacked by a massive lion. The foresters are secretly backed by a rakshasa hoping to penetrate the Sacred Order of Man-Beasts and learn their secrets. The leonine creature hopes that if powerful adventurers can defeat the lion monk, it can steal the *reincarnated* creature's body and use it for study, and to possibly blackmail other members of the order into revealing the ritual magic that allows creatures like Lone Tooth to exist.

No matter their reasons for entering Lone Tooth's lands, when they do, the monk observes them for some time. If the PCs get in a fight and are careless with their spells, or engage in some other act of destruction, Lone Tooth either warns the PCs or simply attacks them (if they seem disrespectful of nature). If the PCs make an effort to confront Lone Tooth, he must be persuaded to reveal his true nature. Once this is done, he might be convinced to accompany the party should the characters persuade him that he could do more good for nature elsewhere, or if they promise to find another guardian for his territory. Ω

WOE TO MISTLEDALE

BY SKIP WILLIAMS

ARTWORK BY PETER BERGTING • CARTOGRAPHY BY PETER WHITLEY

"Woe to Mistledale" is set in the Dales region of the *Forgotten Realms*, and serves as a sequel to "The Raiders of Galath's Roost" in *Dungeon* issue #87, although you need not have played that adventure to use this one.

The adventure requires the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting* and makes use of the map of the Dales region on page 117 and the map of the town of Ashabenford on page 134 (portions of both maps have been reproduced here for reference during play). The adventure can be easily adapted for play outside the Realms by altering the names of specific people and places from the campaign setting.

The adventure is designed for a party of four 8th-level characters. A party of 7th-level characters could tackle the adventure, but will require some help to survive the climactic encounter. Some of the NPCs in this adventure might lend a hand, particularly Jarrod Rold from **Scene 2** and Teegahn from **Scene 3**. See the "Scaling the Adventure" sidebar for details on altering the adventure for groups of different levels.

BACKGROUND

Once known as the lucky Dale, thanks mostly to its protected location in the heart of the Dalelands, Mistledale faces hard times these days. The departure of most elves from the neighboring forest of Cormanthor and the subsequent rise of the drow in those former elven lands has put Mistledale squarely on the front lines in a guerrilla war (see pages 118, 125, and 133 in the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting*).

Mistledale's troubles aren't limited to drow raids, however. The rulers of Zhentil Keep, who have long coveted the Dales for their agrarian riches and control of key trade routes between the Moonsea region and points south and west, have lately taken an interest in Mistledale. Mistledale lies along the Moonsea Ride, a major trade route that runs from Hillsfar in the north to Tilverton in the southwest. Whoever controls Mistledale controls the Moonsea Ride, and the Zhents would dearly like to control the Moonsea Ride. Were they to do so, they could have a monopoly on nearly all trade flowing west out of the Moonsea region.

Wary of their growing commitments elsewhere, the Zhents have not as yet made any overt moves against Mistledale. Instead, they seek to sow a little chaos in the region. If Mistledale becomes a truly lawless region, reason the Zhents, caravan traffic along the Moonsea Ride would slow to a trickle, and the Zhents would have their monopoly. They have already sponsored a few raids in Mistledale (see issue #87), and now they're ready to send more trouble this way.

The situation in Mistledale has reached a sort of equilibrium at present. The folk of the Dale patrol the forest's edges, trying to intercept drow raiders before they can slip into the Dale, while elves from Semberholme to the southeast and Tangledtrees to the east offer what assistance they can. The drow, whose ambitions in Mistledale are limited to simply keeping attention focused on the Dales and away from their efforts to colonize the forest, are happy with the result, but the Zhents want to liven things up a little.

One key to cooperation between humans and elves in the Dalelands is the Dales Compact, an ancient treaty between the elves of Cormanthor and the people of the Dales that keeps settlement in the Dales constrained to naturally unforested areas. It also prohibits logging in the forest. Although several centuries have passed since the Compact has truly been in force, most Dalesfolk continue to honor its general terms. The actual agreement was not so simple. For example, the elves recognized the Dales' need to exploit some forest products and set aside areas along the forest's boundaries where the Dalesfolk could harvest some timber. Almost no one in the Dales today recalls the details of the Compact, and only the force of tradition upholds the agreement now.

Still, logging is on the increase throughout Cormanthor, much to the chagrin of the elves still living there. The Zhents hope to increase friction between Mistledale and the elves as a cover for their attempt to cut off the Moonsea Ride and isolate Hillsfar. The Zhents are quite aware that any threat to the road would invite intervention from Sembia, Cormyr, and Hillsfar, not to mention the other Dales, but that is all part of the plan.

To this end, the Zhents have sent several agents into Mistledale to speak against honoring the Compact and to foster

distrust between the Dalesfolk and the elves in any way they can. Another group is busy attacking caravans along the Moonsea Ride. Thus far, the Zhents have concealed their activities in Mistledale, leaving the Dalesfolk, the elves, and the drow to suspect each other of perpetrating the evil deeds.

ADVENTURE TIMELINE

This adventure takes place over several days in the late winter or early spring (the months of Alturik and Ches—see page 77 in the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting*). The events unfold as follows unless the PCs do something to alter them:

Day 1: A caravan leaves Ashabenford, bound for Hillsfar. Zhent agents in and around Ashabenford note the caravan's departure.

Day 3: A Zhent force ambushes the caravan in the forest of Cormanthor. Most of the caravan's personnel are killed, but a few are taken prisoner.

Day 5: Zhents establish a roadblock on the Moonsea Ride, just north of where the road enters the forest of Cormanthor.

Day 8: The adventure begins when the Zhents take one of the captured caravan wagons and send it careening into Ashabenford. The wagon contains a pair of trolls and a load of recently cut logs. The Zhents hope to sow destruction and confusion in Ashabenford. The PCs come to the Zhents' attention.

Day 9: Teegahn, a Mistledale lumber merchant, leaves Ashabenford to inspect a logging camp northwest of town. Unless stopped or distracted, Zhent agents in Ashabenford pursue and assassinate Teegahn before he can reach the camp. Later that night, drow raiders from the Underdark attack the lumber camp. The drow and the Zhents are unaware of each other's plans and activities, and each group could care less about the plans of the other.

Day 10 and Beyond: The Zhents deal with the PCs as best they can. They continue to man their roadblock, and Zhent agents based in Ashabenford track and attack the PCs if they have not already done so.

CHARACTER HOOKS

Mistledale's troubles are no secret, and the PCs might become involved in this affair for any number of reasons:

- If the PCs participated in "The Raiders of Galath's Roost," they are known to various movers and shakers in Mistledale, such as Jarrod Rold (now a captain with the Riders of Mistledale) or Zander Wolcot (a gentleman farmer). Either of these people, or the authorities in Ashabenford, might appeal to the PCs for help or seek to hire the them as troubleshooters.
- The PCs learn that one Ilten Blackeagle of Ashabenford is hiring adventurers as scouts and guards for his caravans. Ilten organized the caravan the Zhents attacked, and if the PCs accept Ilten's offer, finding out what happened to it will be their first order of business.
- The elves have become concerned about reports that the age-old Dales Compact is unraveling and one of the PCs (most likely an elf, half-elf, or character known to be friendly to the elves) is asked to investigate the situation. Likewise, any PC with connections to the Harpers or a similar organization might be asked to investigate.

IF YOU'VE PLAYED "THE RAIDERS OF GALATH'S ROOST"

Characters who successfully thwarted the Zhents in "The Raiders of Galath's Roost" probably will be recognized and welcomed by the folk of Mistledale and given the benefit of the doubt when things look bad for them. This could be helpful early in this adventure.

Three NPCs who originally appeared in "The Raiders of Galath's Roost" reappear here: Jarrod Rold, Suddilis (a cleric of Bane), and Xthraxix (Suddilis's imp companion). If any of these NPCs were killed during the previous adventure, replace them with similar characters. These NPCs' memories of the previous adventure could influence their actions in this one—Suddilis in particular might want to get revenge on one or more PCs.

ZHENTS IN ASHABENFORD

The town of Ashabenford has one permanent Zhent mole (Arvien Blackhair—see page 135 in the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting*). Arvien is aware of the other Zhent agents currently operating in Mistledale, but none of these know about Arvien. The Zhents have decided not to risk Arvien's cover by involving her in this operation.

In any case, the Zhents have sufficient eyes and ears in Mistledale to keep tabs on the PCs and deal with them when they start meddling (see **Scene 5**).

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

The action in this adventure is divided into scenes that can be played in almost any order. In some cases, the players might jump back and forth between scenes as they attempt to make sense of the events unfolding around them. If the players finish a scene and move on before they learn all the information available in that scene, it's okay if they return to the first scene later. This is likely to occur in **Scenes 1–4**, which take place in the town of Ashabenford.

CAPTURED FOES

Smart players will be quick to understand the value of taking prisoners during this adventure, because interrogation is the best way to figure out what's going on. Unfortunately, taking prisoners introduces the problem of what to do with them after interrogations are over. Fortunately, the PCs have an easy solution to the problem. Within the town of Ashabenford, the Riders of Mistledale or the clerics of Tyr gladly take charge of anyone the PCs capture. Outside of town, the PCs can leave prisoners at any of Mistledale's scattered farms and be sure that a patrol of riders will pick them up in a day or two.

SCENE 1: RUNAWAY WAGON (EL 7)

This scene occurs early in the evening while the PCs are in the town of Ashabenford. The Zhents who raided Ilten's caravan have decided to send one of the wagons they captured back through Ashabenford. The wagon originally carried typical Mistledale exports: ale, pickled beets, cheese, and grain. It now carries a load of green logs and two passengers: a pair of trolls the Zhents recruited from the depths of the forest of Cormanthor.

> A damp chill settles over the town of Ashabenford as the sun sets. As dusk falls, fog rolls in from the river, wrapping the streets in a gray pall. All around, you hear a flurry of activity as the townsfolk get ready to settle in for the night. Shutters slam, footsteps ring on the cobbles, and conversations hurry to a close. Sound seems magnified in the heavy air, and even distant noises come to you clearly. Soon, the aroma of good plain country cooking permeates the fog, making the air outside seem even colder and more clammy.
>
> Abruptly, the clangor of a bell, struck sharply and rapidly, splits the air, and you can hear another sound. It starts low, like distant summer thunder, but grows rapidly into a chorus of drumming hooves and the clatter of wheels moving too quickly over the cobblestone streets. "Runaway!" someone shouts. "Runaway, headin' to the ford!"

The Zhents brought the wagon close to Ashabenford, hitched three pairs of fresh horses to it, loaded the trolls aboard, and then sent the team charging, driverless, into town. The wagon entered Ashabenford from the east, and it's headed at top speed along the town's main street toward the ford. The town watch saw the wagon bearing down on them and tried to stop it, but the panicked horses overran them and continued on. Unable to catch the wagon, and unaware of its deadly cargo, the watch members rang the town's alarm bell.

The wagon is a kind commonly used to carry freight cross country. It has a leather cover to keep out the elements; the cover is lashed closed, but slits at the front and back allow the trolls inside to peep out. A driver's seat at the front is big enough for two Medium creatures. Four horses or oxen commonly draw wagons of this kind, but the Zhents have attached an extra pair of heavy horses to it.

Wagon Body: 3 in. thick; AC 8; Hardness 5; hp 15, break DC 18.

Wagon Cover: paper thin; AC 8; Hardness 0; hp 2, break DC 13.

Wagon Wheel: 2 in. thick; AC 10; Hardness 5; hp 20, break DC 23.

The wagon moves at a speed of 50 toward the ford. The horses stop for nothing until they reach the ford, where they skid to a halt. They fear the trolls in the wagon, but they're also afraid to enter the water without some coaxing from a driver.

The foggy air limits vision to about 50 feet, but the PCs can make their way toward the wagon, thanks to all the noise. Feel free to decide exactly where in town the PCs are (probably near their lodgings). If they decide to investigate the noise, they can intercept the wagon on its way to the ford, or find it stopped at the ford, depending on how quickly they move.

If the PCs try to intercept the wagon before it reaches the water, they have to stop the wagon.

Creatures: Six normal heavy horses draw the wagon, and a pair of trolls lie concealed inside.

Heavy Horses (6): hp 19 each; *Monster Manual* 273.

Trolls (2): hp 63 each; *Monster Manual* 247. Each troll has received a *resist energy* spell, giving it fire resistance 10. The spells were cast by Suddilis, a cleric of Bane (see **Scene 8**).

A few riders of Mistledale and their captain, Jarrod Rold, arrive shortly after the wagon stops (6 rounds). If the PCs are still fighting the trolls, they may lend a hand. Otherwise, they simply keep the crowd back.

Riders of Mistledale, Male and Female Ftr1 (4): CR 1; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 1d10+3; hp 13; Init +1; Spd 20 ft. (50 ft. when mounted); AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17; BAB +1; Grap +3; Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (1d8+2/19–20,

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

"Woe to Mistledale" is intended for four 8th-level PCs. It can be easily altered for larger or smaller groups, or for higher- or lower-level groups by using the guidelines provided here.

6th- and 7th-level PCs: Run the adventure mostly as written, but give the PCs some aid in the form of magical healing (from a friendly cleric in town who works with the Riders of Mistledale), more opportunities to rest, or NPC assistance (from Jarrod Rold or one of his associates). PCs of this level might not have the tracking resources for some encounters, or money to hire trackers for that matter. Provide them with an alternative method to obtain relevant information, or perhaps approach them with a friendly NPC ranger who is willing to track but not fight for the PCs. Since most of the villains in the adventure are classed characters, you can scale them back by reducing them by 1 or 2 levels. Also, consider using ogres in most of the encounters with trolls.

9th- and 10th-level PCs: The adventure is still challenging for PCs of this level, but access to higher-level magic might still disrupt the adventure's flow (especially Divination spells like *commune*). Increase all classed NPCs by 1 or 2 levels, and add another pair of drow raiders to **Scene 7**. Also, add one troll to **Scene 8**, or give each troll in the adventure one fighter or barbarian level. Finally, consider adding a time element (an important incoming shipment Mistledale desperately needs that can't be disrupted, or perhaps a visiting dignitary whose death or kidnapping would cause friction with a neighboring region) to heighten the sense of urgency and force the PCs onward when they might otherwise stop to rest.

Remember that changing the Encounter Levels should raise or lower the amount of treasure in the adventure. Consult page 51 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (Tables **3–3**, **3–4**, and **3–5**) to determine the treasure appropriate to the new encounters.

longsword) or +3 melee (1d6+2/×3, lance), or +2 ranged (1d6/×3, composite shortbow); AL LG; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Handle Animal +3, Jump –2*, Ride (horse) +5. *Feats:* Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack.

*Includes –7 armor check penalty.

Possessions: Chainmail, heavy wooden shield, longsword, lance, dagger, composite shortbow with 20 arrows, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, light warhorse.

Jarrod Rold, Male Human Rgr3: CR 3; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 3d8+3; hp 20; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13; BAB +3; Grap +5; Atk +6 melee (1d8+2/19–20, masterwork longsword) or +6 ranged (1d8+2/×3, masterwork composite longbow [+2 Str]); Full Atk +4 melee (1d8+2/19–20, masterwork longsword) and +4 melee (1d6+1/19–20, masterwork short sword), or +6 ranged (1d8+2/×3, masterwork composite longbow [+2 Str]); SA combat style (two-weapon fighting), favored enemy (humanoid—elves +2); SQ wild empathy; AL CG; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 12.

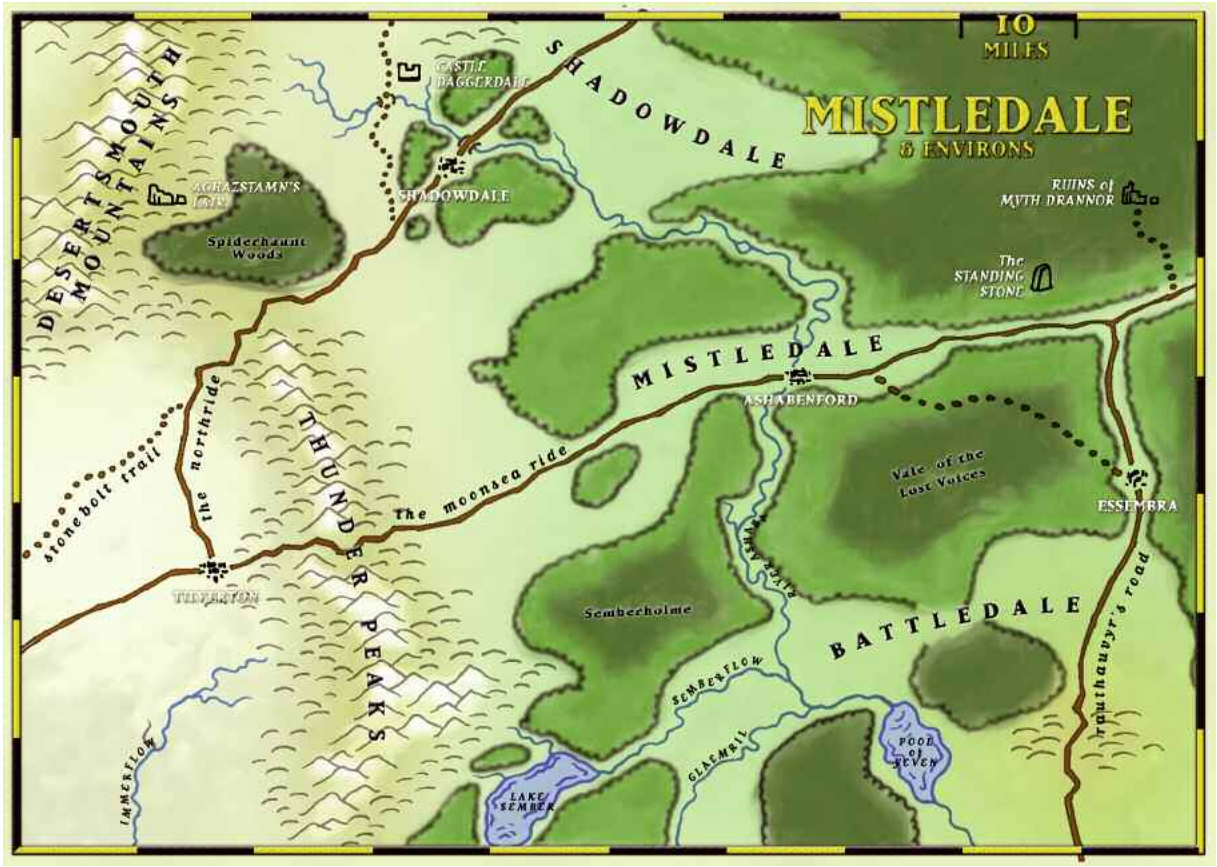
Skills: Hide +8, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (nature) +4, Listen +7, Move Silently +8, Ride (horse) +8, Search +7, Spot +11, Survival +10 (+12 to avoid getting lost or follow tracks). *Feats:* Blind-Fight, Endurance, Point Blank Shot, Skill Focus (Survival), Track.

Languages: Common, Elven.

Possessions: Masterwork studded leather, masterwork longsword, masterwork short sword, masterwork composite longbow [+2 Str] with 20 arrows, dagger, *eyes of the eagle*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, light warhorse.

Tactics: The horses race along the road as quickly as they can, making a double move each round. They stop for nothing, but try to maneuver around creatures or objects in their path. If unable to avoid running over a creature, the horses try to overrun it (treat the team and the wagon as a Gargantuan creature). The team tramples or pushes unattended objects of size Large or smaller if it can't move around them. In doing so, the team deals 4d6 points of damage to the object. A solid barrier or a Huge or larger object (even an illusory one) makes the team stop.

A character can coax the horses to a halt either by grabbing the bridle on one of the lead horses, or jumping on one of the lead horses' backs. The easiest way to grab a bridle is to match speed with the team. Doing so from the back of a mount or from another vehicle drawn by a draft animal requires a Ride or Handle Animal check (DC 15) to match speeds, followed by a successful grapple check against one of the horses. If the Ride or Handle Animal check succeeds, the character gets a +5 circumstance bonus to the grapple check. A character who can somehow manage a speed of 50 on his own can gain the circumstance bonus without making a Ride or Handle Animal check. A character can also simply try to grab a bridle as the team thunders by. If the check succeeds and the character establishes a hold, the team slows and stops in 1 round.



Leaping onto a horse requires a Ride or Jump check (DC 20); success indicates that the character has managed to get on a horse's back. Failure by 5 points or more indicates the character falls and takes 2d6 points of damage. If a character gets aboard, she can attempt a Ride or Handle Animal check (DC 20) to make the team stop. If this check fails, the team keeps heading toward the ford.

Leaping into the driver's seat on the wagon (or onto the back of the wagon) might seem like a good idea; this requires a Jump check (DC 20). However, the reins to control the team were cut by the Zhents, and the trolls in the wagon lose no time in attacking any character who jumps in.

The trolls stay hunkered down in the wagon until it crashes, stops, or until someone tries to board the wagon. The wagon's interior is well packed with twigs and logs, giving the trolls plenty of cushioning in the event of a crash. The trolls can escape the wreckage with a move action after a crash.

The trolls are under orders to kill every creature they see, and they follow their instructions with relish. If unopposed by the PCs, the trolls work their way east and north (in the general direction of Battledale). They leave a considerable trail of bodies in their wake; meanwhile PCs within the town hear numerous cries of: "Trolls! Bring fire quick!" If the PCs don't confront the trolls, several riders of Mistledale move from their headquarters and stop the trolls themselves. Once confronted by anyone more powerful than the unarmed townsfolk, the trolls fight to the death.

Development: Curious townsfolk gather around the runaway wagon (or what's left of it) once the commotion dies down. The riders of Mistledale stand guard over the wagon; if the PCs helped deal with the trolls, they're allowed to inspect it. If they didn't help, a successful Diplomacy check (DC 15) directed at Jarrod is necessary to get near the wreckage. If the PCs investigate, move on to **Scene 2**. Otherwise move on to **Scene 4**.

Treasure: If the PCs stop the wagon without wrecking it or killing any of the horses, Ilten Blackeagle pays them a reward of 25 gp (not much, but it's all he can afford). The town of Ashabenford pays the PCs 100 gp for each troll they kill or capture.

If the PCs aren't already working for Ilten, the merchant might try to hire them (see the introduction).

Ad-hoc XP Award: If the PCs defeat the trolls, increase their XP award by 10% to account for the spells the trolls have received.

SCENE 2: A MYSTERY CARGO AND GRUMPY ELVES (EL 6)

If the PCs look over what's left of the wagon and team after **Scene 1**, they notice that the surviving horses seem exhausted and nervous, but several of them bear the brands of the Black Eagle Coster, a local trading company. The PCs might not know the brands, but the townsfolk do. The townsfolk also quickly recognize the wagon as the work of a local wheelwright named Braunstar.

A look inside the wagon reveals a jumble of green logs and fresh twigs, along with the smell of ale and vinegar. A Knowledge (local) or Knowledge (nature) check (DC 15) reveals the

wood to be a mixture of oak and shadowtop, both local species. In addition, a successful Knowledge (nature) reveals that the logs were cut sometime in the past week. The presence of the logs causes quite a stir among the townsfolk:

> A sizable crowd has come to gawk at the wagon and wonder out loud what its sudden appearance and mad, driverless dash through the streets might mean. You hear the words, "This must have something to do with drow" repeated several times. The people in the crowd are mostly humans, but you see a few half-elves, elves, halflings, and dwarves mixed in. A trio of scowling elves seems to have claimed a space all to themselves. You hear one of them say, to nobody in particular, "Ilten Blackeagle had better be able to explain those logs!" This statement sends a tremor through the crowd, and the assembled townsfolk fall quiet for a moment. Their voices soon swell again, but people seem to avoid eye contact with the elves.

Creatures: About twenty citizens of Ashabenford have gathered here. Each is a 1st- through 3rd-level commoner or expert. If the PCs wish to question them, proceed to **Scene 4**.The horses and the riders of Mistledale from **Scene 1** are also still here.

The three elves are wood elves from Semberholme. They came to Ashabenford to help defend the town. They're not surprised to meet trolls, but they seem shocked and outraged to see a wagonload of logs.

Cymnar, Rhisthil, and Vestele, Male and Female Wood Elf Rgr2/Clr2 (Corellon Larethian): CR 4; Medium Humanoid (elf); HD 4d8; hp 23 each; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13; BAB +3; Grap +6; Atk +8 melee (1d8+3/19–20, masterwork longsword) or +5 ranged (1d8+3/×3, masterwork composite longbow [+3 Str]); Full Atk +6 melee (1d8+3/19–20, masterwork longsword) and +5 melee (1d6+1/19–20, masterwork short sword), or +5 ranged (1d8+3/×3, masterwork composite longbow [+3 Str]); SA combat style (two-weapon combat), favored enemy (goblinoids +2), spells, turn undead 3/day; SQ elf traits, wild empathy; AL CG; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 11.

Skills: Concentration +4, Hide +11, Listen +7, Move Silently +6, Search +5, Spot +7, Survival +7 (+9 to follow tracks); *Feats:* Dodge, Point Blank Shot, Track, Weapon Focus (longsword).

Languages: Common, Elven.

Cleric Spells Prepared (4/4; base save DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds, detect magic, mending, resistance*; 1st—*command, entropic shield, magic weapon*, shield of faith.*

*Domain spell. *Domains:* Protection (*protective ward* 1/day), War (Martial Weapon Proficiency and Weapon Focus with deity's favored weapon).

Possessions: Masterwork studded leather armor, masterwork longsword, masterwork short sword, masterwork composite longbow [+3 Str] with 20 arrows, *cloak of elvenkind, 2 potions of cure light wounds.*

Development: Nobody here cares to fight. If the PCs wish to question them, the elves prove willing to talk, but they're very angry. They relate the following in response to the PCs questions or comments:

- "Nobody is supposed to be shipping whole logs out of here. It's a breech of the Compact—no taking timber from the forest!"
- "The Compact provides for mutual defense between the elves of Cormanthor and the folk of the Dales. We elves of Semberholme have always stood by the Compact. That's why we're here now, to defend our allies. This is a betrayal!"
- "The wagon belongs Ilten Blackeagle, let him answer for its contents!"

FEATS OF THE REALMS

The following feats from the adventure appear in the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting* but are reprinted here for your convenience.

BLOODED [GENERAL]

You know what it means to fight for your life, and the value of quick wits and quicker reactions when blades are bared and deadly spells chanted. Enemies find it difficult to catch you off guard.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus on Initiative and a +2 bonus on Spot checks.

FORESTER [GENERAL]

Faerûn's great forests stretch for hundreds of miles across the northlands. You are knowledgeable about the secrets of the forest and wise in its ways.

Benefit: You receive a +2 bonus on all Heal checks and a +2 bonus on all Survival checks.

MILITIA [GENERAL]

You served in a local militia, training with weapons suitable for use on the battlefield.

Benefit: You get Martial Weapon Proficiency (longbow) and Martial Weapon Proficiency (longspear). In Luiren, this feat applies to Martial Weapon Proficiency (shortbow) and Martial Weapon Proficiency (short sword) instead of longbow and longspear.

SILVER PALM [GENERAL]

Your culture is based on haggling and the art of the deal.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus on all Appraise and Bluff checks.

STRONG SOUL [GENERAL]

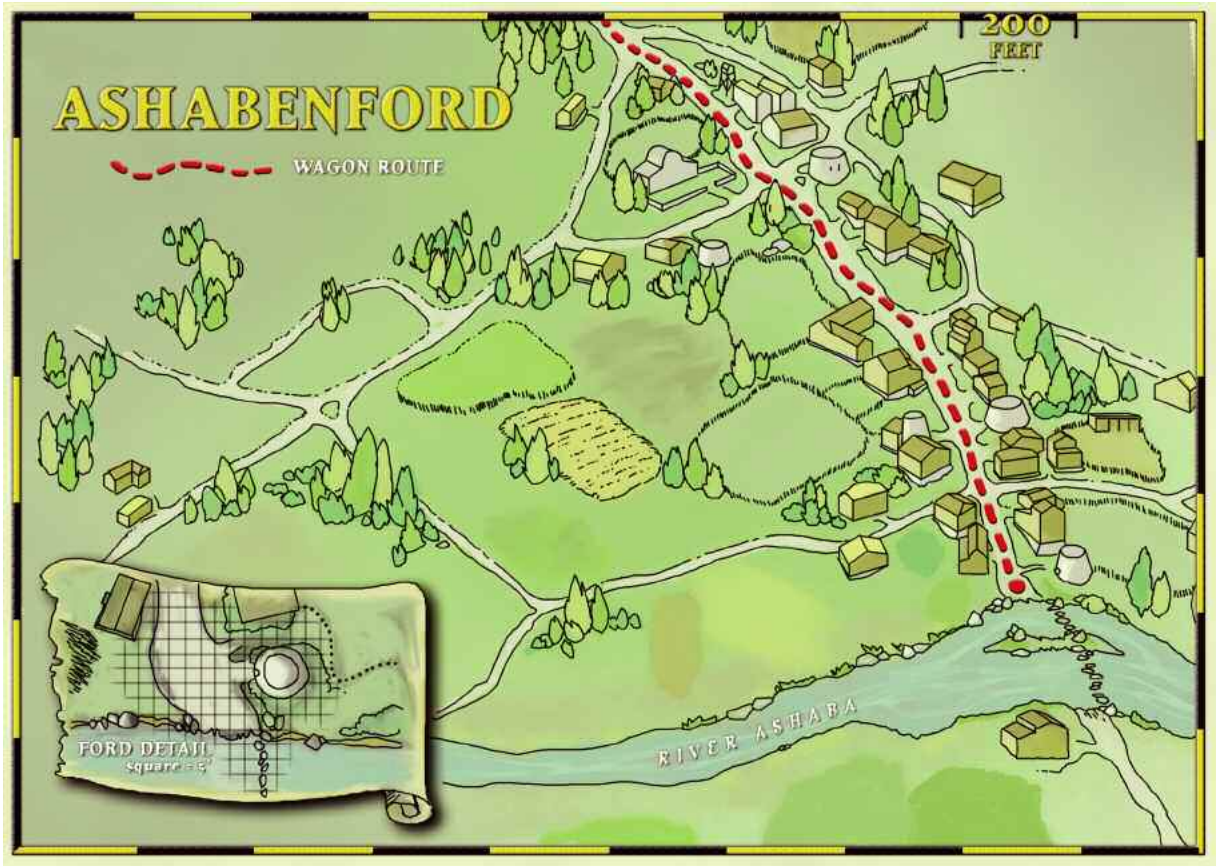
The souls of your people are hard to separate from their bodies.

Benefit: You get a +1 bonus on all Fortitude and Will saves and an additional +1 bonus on saving throws against energy draining and death effects.

THUG [GENERAL]

Your people know how to get the jump on the competition and push other people around. While others debate, you act.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus on Initiative checks, and a +2 bonus on Intimidate checks.



- "The drow of Cormanthor sometimes use troll slaves or mercenaries. This could be a drow trick. So could the logs, we suppose." (This last is delivered grudgingly.)

That's about all the elves are willing to say to the PCs. They avoid being overtly impolite to the group, but they're angry and want to take their complaint to the authorities in Ashabenford.

No matter what the PCs do, Braunstar Wheelwright and Ilten Blackeagle (owner of the Black Eagle Coster) are summoned to the scene to identify their property and explain how it came to be involved in this incident. The two merchants haven't a clue what actually happened, but they can supply the following information if asked the right questions:

- Both the wagon and the horses belong to the Black Eagle Coster. Ilten certainly expected to see the wagon again, but not this soon and not under these circumstances. Ilten assumes that the whole caravan is lost and that drow raiders must have sent back the wagon with its new, deadly cargo.
- All the Black Eagle Coster's caravans have been heavily guarded lately, owing to the drow raids in the area. This one had a dozen warriors, a cleric of Tyr, and a sorcerer.
- The wagon and its team of four horses left Ashabenford eight days ago as part of a small caravan (ten wagons) bound for Hillsfar and carrying grain, pickled beets, and ale (all produced locally), along with several bales of wool and cotton cloth. The latter were part of a consignment from Sembia.
- The Sembian merchant house that owns the cloth has an agent in Ashabenford: Brechtu, who can be found at the White Hart Inn most nights.
- Ilten does not deal in lumber or logs. He never has and probably never will; there's no profit in it. There is some timber cutting done around here, but it's mostly for local use. The elves have never objected to that before.
- There's one lumber merchant in the area: Teegahn. Braunstar buys lumber from him. Teegahn is in town now, probably at the White Hart Inn.

If the PCs can cast *speak with animals*, they can interrogate the horses, but the animals don't have a very clear recollection of events:

- "We were pulling our loads along the man-road, as usual, right into the big wood. Everyone got nervous when we got there. During the first dark after reaching the wood, all kinds of sneaky, nasty things came out of the dark. They killed all the two-leggers with us, and captured some horses and wagons.

Note: Some of the humanoids with the caravan were captured, not killed. But the horses don't know that.

- "It was an awful fight. There were hooded two-leggers with bows, and tall two-leggers who smelled awful (just like the ones that hid in our wagon just now).

Note: The horses are describing unidentified humanoids (Zhents disguised as elves) and a few trolls.

- "After the fight was over, we were all blindfolded. We were stabled in a cave, with lots of pointy-eared folks, and some tall two-leggers who smelled awful. Later we were blindfolded again and taken to the man-road, and we came back here, with a wagon and a lot of horses, and some smelly two-leggers in the wagon. We didn't have to pull the wagon at first, but just before we got back home, the wagon stopped, and we were hitched to it. It was foggy even then, and some two leggers came out of the fog and our two-leggers killed them. There was a two-legs stallion who chanted and sang a lot, and we got really scared. So we ran and ran."

Note: The "cave" is actually a dugout shelter the Zhents have built (see **Scene 3**). When the Zhents were getting ready to launch the wagon, some locals spotted the Zhents on the road outside of town, so the Zhents killed them. The "stallion" is a human cleric of Bane who cast the defensive spells on the trolls. Once that was done, he cast *fear* to frighten the horses into running for their lives.

The horses have no real idea how long they have been away from Ashabenford or where the "cave" lies. They do know where the caravan was attacked and where they were hitched to the wagon. A horse could lead the party to either spot.

Characters who manage to capture at least one troll can question it and possibly learn a great deal. The trolls are hostile and don't wish to talk, but if pushed, the trolls claim they captured the wagon outside of town and decided to take a joyride into town and feast on some manflesh. The PCs can persuade them to be more truthful with a successful Diplomacy check (DC 35) to improve their attitude to friendly. A successful Intimidate check also gets them talking (opposed by the troll's level check, which is made with a +5 bonus). If inclined to be truthful, the trolls relate the following (note that the trolls only speak Giant):

- "Some days ago (the trolls aren't sure exactly when), some humans wearing silly pointed ears offered us gold and meat for some easy work attacking some humans and elves."
- "The humans were wearing fake, pointy ears, green clothes, and carrying bows. They were pretty skinny for humans."
- "Things have been going well so far. We attacked a circle of wagons in the forest some leagues north of here a few nights ago (the trolls aren't sure exactly when)."
- "Sometime after that, our employers decided it was time for us to feast on manflesh. We were loaded onto a wagon and driven south. Just outside of town, we were placed in a wagon. Our employers hitched fresh horses to the wagons and sent us into town, with orders to kill everyone we met."
- "After our night on the town, we were to make our way back to the scene of the attack on the circle of wagons and get further instructions."
- "Our employers have a camp somewhere near the attack site, but we have never seen it."
- "Our employers have a few men and a couple more trolls working for them."

The trolls can lead the party back to the site where the caravan was attacked or to the place where they boarded the wagon into town.

After the PCs are done here, they can seek out Brechtu (see **Scene 3**), talk to some other townsfolk (see **Scene 4**), visit the site where the wagon started its run into town (**Scene 1**), or go to the site were the caravan was attacked (**Scene 4**). However, if the PCs try to go the attack site, they'll probably encounter the Zhent roadblock (**Scene 3**) first.

The PCs might also wish to question someone about drow activity in the area, or about Mistledale's military situation. Jarrod Rold can answer such questions:

- "Drow attacks on caravans happen all too frequently, although the drow prefer to harass small parties of travelers and unarmed civilians when possible."
- "The drow have proven very unpredictable about when and where they strike. They usually attack at night, and on moonless nights most of all. There is absolutely no pattern to the locations of their attacks."
- "The drow sometimes employ monsters in their attacks. They been known to use trolls and humanoids like gnolls and orcs."

SCENE 3: AT THE WHITE HART INN (EL 8)

Use this event if the PCs seek out Brechtu, the Sembian merchant, at the White Hart Inn.

> The White Hart Inn stands near the west bank of the river. It looks like a prosperous and comfortable place. The common room isn't exactly packed, but is well filled with garrulous townsfolk and travelers. The incident of the runaway wagon seems to be the main topic of conversation here. The talk sounds lively, but not all that friendly. Your arrival doesn't appear to attract much attention, except from one beefy-looking fellow who stands at the bar, tankard in hand. He glares at you for a moment but soon turns his attention to a companion. The barkeeper gives you a polite nod while keeping a wary eye on the crowd.

The White Hart Inn caters to one and all, although the management has little patience with strangers who misbehave. Food and drink of good quality are available at normal prices. Sleeping rooms are clean and comfortable, and each costs 1 gp a night (meals not included).

The staff can direct the PCs to Brechtu, who sits at a table. If the PCs inquire about Teegahn, the staff can point him out, too; he sits quietly at one end of the bar, trying to look inconspicuous.

A character who pauses to listen to the general conversion can pick up the gist, which deals primarily with the merits of Dales Compact. Most folks here are all for observing it, just as

they have for generations, but a few think it's high time to give it up. A PC who listens in (Listen DC 15) picks up part of the following exchange, which is representative of several conversations in the inn tonight. A check of DC 20 garners the whole conversation:

- "The Compact has served everyone well for ages now. Why fix it if it ain't broken?"
- "Yeah, we can get all the wood we need from the outskirts that the Compact doesn't cover. Why should we be greedy for more?"
- "I'll tell you why—profit! Them elves have been sitting for centuries on timber that'd bring a fortune in some markets, and it's just going to waste."
- "It's not wasted! Those trees provide homes and food for all sorts of nature's creatures."
- "Quit being such a bleeding heart! What are you anyway, a druid? You can't stand in the way of progress!"
- "I'm not sure progress depends on cutting timber. We've got plenty of trade goods, and there's nothing to be gained by infuriating the elves over a little timber."
- "They'll get over it. Let 'em find someplace else to hold their songs and dances. Forests are a resource."
- "Sorry, I'm not interested in explaining to a bunch of mad elves that trees are just commodities. They can be real persuasive about their point of view, especially from a distance. And they hold grudges a long time."
- "He's right; my great-granddad got an elf riled one time, and they still hate our family. Sure as heck, if anything happens to them trees, we'll be the first ones with a target on our houses."
- "We leave the forest alone, and the elves don't bother us. Seems fair enough to me."
- "But drow hide in them forests too. I say clear-cut the lot! If we do that, they won't have so many places to hide. Who knows? Maybe them elves have a deal with the drow. Where's the proof they're really enemies?"

Creatures: The crowd includes about thirty citizens and visitors to Ashabenford, plus a serving staff of three. All present (with the exception of the NPCs detailed below) range from 1st- through 3rd-level commoners or experts of assorted races (mostly human).

The owner and barkeep, Holfast Harpenshield, is wary of trouble tonight and has his bastard sword ready behind the bar.

Holfast Harpenshield, Male Human Ftr9: hp 72; NG. Use the standard statistics for an NPC fighter from page 117 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (but no armor).

Other noteworthy characters here include Brechtu, a Zhentarim agent sent here to cause trouble who is posting as a Sembian merchant, Brechtu's bodyguards, and Teegahn the lumber merchant.

Brechtu's has been here for more than a year, playing his role, pretending to make friends with the locals, and biding his time. After hearing talk of the Dales Compact, he decided to act, and he began by sending his compatriots word of Ilten Blackeagle's most recent caravan, along with details of its route, schedule, and guards (all information to which he had access, since he himself had goods in the caravan). Brechtu has two bodyguards with him and two more elsewhere in town, keeping their eyes and ears open. He also has a raven familiar that is currently away gathering information.

Brechtu: 34; see page 60 for complete statistics.

Brechtu's two bodyguards are armed but sit quietly at a corner table.

Olef and Ermilhk, Zhentarim Bodyguards: hp 31 each; see page 60 for complete statistics.

Among the locals Brechtu has befriended is Evadan, a farmer from the northern end of Mistledale who lost his home and immediate family to a drow raid last fall. Evadan had originally intended to spend the winter in Ashabenford and return to his homestead in the spring to rebuild. Instead, he has fallen victim to Brechtu's *charm person* spells and spent most of the winter drinking and growling about cutting down the whole of Cormanthor as a solution to the "drow problem."

Evadan, Male Com2/Exp2: CR 3; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 2d4+2 plus 2d6+2; hp 16; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 9, touch 9, flat-footed 9; BAB +2; Grap +3; Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (1d3+1, unarmed strike) or +3 melee (1d4+1/19–20, dagger); AL NG; SV Fort +1, Ref –1, Will +3; Str 13, Dex 9, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Handle Animal +5, Heal +5, Profession (farmer) +7, Ride (horse) +3, Spot +2, Survival +3, Use Rope +3. *Feats:* Blooded*, Forester*, Skill Focus (Handle Animal).

*These feats are found in the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting* and reprinted in the sidebar on page 54 for your convenience.

Possessions: Dagger.

Teegahn is a half-moon elf who comes from a family of half-elves that has lived in Mistledale for generations. He makes his living by carefully harvesting trees from the forest around Mistledale, and he's been in town all day buying supplies for a lumber camp he has established about 20 miles northwest of here. Bad news travels fast, and Teegahn grew alarmed when he heard about the incident with the wagon and its cargo of logs. He sits at the bar, listening to the conversation around him and trying to decide what to do about his current logging operation.

Teegahn, Male Half-elf Exp2/Drd6: CR 7; Medium Humanoid (half-elf); HD 2d6+2 plus 6d8+6; hp 50; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 18; BAB +5; Grap +5; Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d6/18–20, masterwork scimitar) or +7 ranged (1d6, sling with masterwork bullet); SA spells; SQ animal companions (Jokasta and Reysted), half-elf traits, nature sense, resist nature's lure, trackless step, *wild shape* (Small or Medium animal 2/day), wild empathy (+9), woodland stride; AL NG; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +12; Str 10, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 12.

Skills: Appraise +5, Concentration +10, Diplomacy +3, Gather Information +3, Handle Animal +8, Heal +7, Knowledge (nature) +9, Listen +6, Profession (forester) +12, Ride (horse) +5, Search +2,

Spellcraft +3, Spot +6, Survival +10 (+12 in aboveground environments). *Feats:* Forester*, Lightning Reflexes, Strong Soul*.

*These feats are found in the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting* and reprinted in the sidebar on page 54 for your convenience.

Druid Spells Prepared (5/4/4/3; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds, detect magic, guidance, know direction, light;* 1st—*calm animals, entangle, magic fang, speak with animals;* 2nd—*bear's endurance, heat metal, speak with animals, summon swarm;* 3rd—*call lightning, cure moderate wounds, neutralize poison.*

Possessions: +1 hide armor, heavy wooden shield, masterwork scimitar, sling with 20 masterwork bullets, *ring of protection +1, amulet of natural armor +1, potion of blur, potion of haste,* two scrolls of *greater magic fang,* scroll of *remove disease,* scroll of *neutralize poison,* scroll of *lesser restoration, wand of barkskin* (29 charges), *wand of cure light wounds* (18 charges).

Jokasta, Tiger: hp 45; *Monster Manual* 281.

Reysted, Owl: hp 4; *Monster Manual* 277.

If the PCs approach Brechtu, he plays his role as a Sembian merchant to the hilt and offers these observations in response to the PCs' questions:

- "Yes, I put several bales of good cloth on a Black Eagle caravan a few days ago. My job was to get the best price for the goods that I could, and I decided I could do that by sending it on to Hillsfar. There's just not much free cash in Mistledale these days. Now it seems I should have taken what I could get locally."
- "I'd have to check my records to tell you exactly what was in the shipment. I must confess I haven't been too eager to assess my loss. Of course, maybe the wagon carrying my goods got through. You never know."
- "I represent the Moonsea-Dales trade consortium. Our headquarters is in Yhaunn. We're fairly new, as merchant houses go. We ship Dales goods across the Inner Sea, but we also handle shipments through the Dales to points north."
- "I handle any kind of goods. I have not purchased any of Mistledale's excellent lumber yet, but I will if the price is right. I understand that many farmers around here do some woodcutting in the winter as a way to earn some extra cash while their fields are snowbound. So perhaps a bargain will come my way soon."
- "I imagine the logging of Cormanthor cold be quite a boon to the Dales. The amount of wealth the tress represent is staggering, and it would clear a lot of farmland. This Dales Compact is not only an anachronism, it's holding the Dales back."

The merchant house Brechtu mentioned exists, but only as a front for the Zhents (so the statement is not quite a lie). Most of Brechtu's other statements are at least half truths. His final statement is completely inaccurate, but also not a lie; the trees of Cormanthor do represent a great deal of wealth, if one could find buyers, and clearing the forest would clear farmland for a short time.

If the PCs approach Teegahn, he can set them straight on questions about the Dales Compact and cutting timer in Cormanthor. He gladly offers these observations in response to the PCs' questions:

- "Yes, I'm in the timber business. I spend the summer scouting the edges of the forest for trees that can be cut without harming the rest. Sometimes selective cutting actually helps the forest by opening things up a little and thinning the trees, which greatly reduces the risk of fire."
- "I mark the trees during the summer and local farmers cut them during the winter, when they don't have to work so much on their farms."
- "Most of my customers are locals. It just doesn't pay to ship lumber out of Mistledale. The best and nearest foreign markets for forest products are Cormyr and Sembia, and there are plenty of trees closer to either place than what you can get out of here. Nobody can make money exporting whole logs from this region. It costs too much to ship them. I suppose logs could be cut and floated down the Ashaba river to Scardale. But Scardale is a tough place to do business and plenty of trees grow there already."
- "Occasionally, very occasionally, I manage to sell real top quality stuff to merchants in Cormyr, who come here to buy and ship the wood back. I might get one or two trees a season that produce wood good enough to sell in that fashion."
- "The Dales Compact certainly is not dead—just ask most folks around here. You should also ask the elves of Semberholme. They think the Compact is very important."
- "The Compact never said anything that prohibits logging. What it actually prohibits is wholesale clearing of the forests. There's a wide swath of forest border where the Dalesfolk have always been allowed to take timber. The limits of that area are set out in the Compact. If you had a copy, you could trace them yourself, because they're all defined in relation to the Standing Stone. That's a big monolith the elves erected a ways north of here when the original Compact was signed. In any case, there are plenty of markers in the forest that show where the boundaries lie. You just have to know what they look like."
- "Oh, the boundary markers vary. Piles of stones, trees shaped to grow in special shapes—such as outstretched hands, that sort of thing. Odd, though—someone started messing with the markers this past summer. I figured it was the drow, out to cause trouble."
- "I've got a partial copy of the Compact, along with some old maps that show the borders. I don't imagine that there's a complete copy any closer than Shadowdale, but you'd probably have to go all the way to Candlekeep or Evereska to be sure."
- "If you logged all of Cormanthor you'd go broke. There's no market for that much wood. You'd also destroy the Dales; the whole region would be a desert in no time—well, within a human generation or two. One reason the Dales have good farmland is because they also have the forest."

All of what Teegahn has said is true, except for his speculation about the boundary markers. Teegahn thinks it probably was the drow; in reality, it was the Zhentarim.

Tactics: No one here is looking for a fight, except Evadan, but Holfast is keeping an eye on him and throws him out if he starts to get pushy.

Development: If the PCs question both Teegahn and Brechtu, they have to reconcile the two NPCs' conflicting accounts of the Compact and the timber industry in Mistledale. Brechtu is twisting the truth and doesn't really know what he's talking about. Teegahn is telling the truth and definitely knows what he's talking about. A Sense Motive check (DC 15) reveals Teegahn's earnestness. If the PCs question Brechtu closely, they can attempt Sense Motive checks (opposed by Brechtu's Bluff check) to note that he's not being entirely truthful. Brechtu avoids telling any outright lies and waves away the PCs if they begin probing too deeply. If necessary, he pretends to be drunk and accuses the characters of being "tree-loving fools."

If Brechtu suspects the PCs are on to him, or he guesses that they might be inclined to look further into the wagon incident, he makes plans to attack them outside of Ashabenford (**Scene 5**). He definitely does so if he sees them talking to Teegahn for any length of time. Brechtu won't pick a fight here, but the PCs might. If they do, Brechtu and his bodyguards play the role of affronted merchants as best they can. The guards fight defensively while their employer uses *charm person*, *hold person*, and *Tasha's hideous laughter* spells to disable the PCs. They flee the fight as quickly as they can. Evadan joins the fray on Brechtu's side, however, while Holfast herds the locals outdoors and rings for the watch. Teegahn dashes out the back door to get his animal companions (they're housed in the stable out back), and returns in 2 rounds to join the PCs.

Holfast returns also in 2 rounds, but first watches the fight for a round or two. Eventually, he plunges in with his bastard sword, fighting defensively and striking to subdue. He's had doubts about Brechtu for some time and probably joins the PCs. After about 5 minutes, twenty riders of Mistledale, led by Jarrod Rold, show up.

If the PCs get into a fight here, they'll have to do some fast talking, even with Holfast and Teegahn to vouch for them. Brechtu and his bodyguards admit to nothing, pointing out they were only defending themselves and that they used only non-lethal tactics. The PCs, Brechtu says, were drunk and spoiling for a fight.

Brechtu is glib enough to wiggle out of trouble unless the PCs either out-talk him or manage to throw suspicion on him. A search of his personal effects and his room reveals plenty of evidence that he's a Zhent spy. First, there's Brechtu's holy symbol of Bane (which the Dales folk recognize right away). In Brechtu's room, searchers find two cages full of pigeons for carrying messages to Yhaunn and to the Citadel of the Raven (headquarters of the Zhentarim, see page 160 in the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting*). Brechtu's fireplace contains several half-burned letters detailing his orders and plans. Brechtu has a chest full of assorted adventuring equipment, and a stock of fake elf ears, blond and silver wigs, green clothing cut in eleven style, and a number of tunics and tabards just like those worn by the riders of Mistledale.

The PCs can persuade Jarrod or Holfast to search Brechtu's things if the Zhent is dead, unconscious, or has fled with a successful Diplomacy check (DC 15).

If Brechtu is present after the fight, however, he does everything he can to shift suspicion away from himself and onto the PCs. If he and the PCs get into a war of words, have one PC make a Diplomacy check opposed by Brechtu's Diplomacy check. The authorities and people of Ashabenford tend to believe Brechtu's side of the story, granting him a +2 circumstance bonus to his check. Should the PCs win, the authorities agree to Search the merchant and his room. At that pronouncement, Brechtu and any surviving bodyguards make a break for the stables, where their horses are waiting.

If Teegahn and the PCs hit it off, Teegahn tells the PCs that he plans to set out for his lumber camp in the morning and he invites the PCs along, either to visit the camp or just to share the road. Teegahn also is willing to accompany the PCs if they leave town to look for clues about the runaway wagon, and he can help them identify the logs in the wagon (from **Scene 2**) if the PCs think to ask.

When the PCs are though here, they can question other townsfolk (**Scene 4**), visit the site where the wagon started its run into town (**Scene 1**), or go to the site were the caravan was attacked (**Scene 9**); however, if the PCs try to go there, they probably encounter the Zhent roadblock (**Scene 8**) or are ambushed by Brechtu (**Scene 5**) first.

SPELLS OF THE REALMS

The following spell from the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting* appears in "Woe to Mistledale." It has been reprinted here for your convenience, but feel free to swap this spell out for a different spell of the same level if you desire.

SNILLOC'S SNOWBALL SWARM

Evocation [Cold]
Level: Sor/Wiz 2
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Effect: 10-ft.-radius burst
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Reflex half
Spell Resistance: Yes

A flurry of magic snowballs erupts from a point you select. The swarm of snowballs deals 2d6 points of cold damage to creatures and objects within the burst. For every two caster levels beyond 3rd, the snowballs deal an extra die of damage, to a maximum of 5d6 at 9th level.

Material Component: A piece of ice or a small white rock chip.

Brechtu has been planning to assassinate Teegahn for some time, and he now decides that sometime soon would be ideal (while the locals remember how angry the elves became when they discovered the logs in the wagon). He saves the attack on the druid for another time, however, if the PCs show any inclination to investigate the wagon incident. Should the PCs leave town in Teegahn's company, Brechtu follows and attacks if he is able. See **Scene 5** for Brechtu's tactics.

SCENE 4: AROUND THE TOWN

If the PCs try to keep an ear out for the local gossip, try a Gather Information check, or just spend some time talking to the locals in Ashabenford, they hear variations on what Teegahn and Brechtu reveal in **Scene 3** (see the conversation sample in that scene for details). Most people agree with Teegahn, although few have his knowledge of the situation.

Development: After this, the PCs can head for the Inn of the White Hart (**Scene 3**), go back and look at the wagon (**Scene 2**), or try to find the place where the wagon began its run into town (**Scene 6**).

SCENE 5: WAYLAID (EL 9)

When the PCs finally leave Ashabenford, Brechtu probably gathers up some muscle and attacks them, provided the PCs don't defeat him before leaving town. If the PCs remain in town for a day or two, Brechtu first pursues and slays Teegahn, then returns to keep an eye on the PCs. If the party leaves town in Teegahn's company, Brechtu follows and attacks. The attack might occur anywhere outside of Ashabenford, but most likely on the Moonsea Ride north of town. Brechtu likely catches up to the PCs when they've stopped to rest or camp for the night. If necessary, Brechtu casts an *invisibility* spell on his familiar and sends it out to scout for the PCs. Adjust the following to fit the circumstances of the attack:

> The pale winter sun, which did little to warm you all day, hangs low in the west, casting enormously long shadows over a landscape covered in patchy snow. The countryside seems empty for miles around, although you can see a few farmsteads in the distance. A rising evening breeze gives you gooseflesh and brings the scent of frost. All is quiet, but you note a familiar sound: hoofbeats. A moment later, a company of cavalry comes into view.

Creatures: Brechtu has brought four toughs with him from Ashabenford. All are mounted on light warhorses. From a distance, the group looks exactly like riders of Mistledale.

Brechtu, Male Human Clr3 (Bane)/Enc4: CR 7; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 3d8+3 plus 4d4+4; hp 34; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 13; BAB +4; Grap +4; Atk/Full Atk +4 melee (1d4/19–20, dagger), or +5 melee (1d6+1, *+1 quarterstaff*), or +5 ranged (1d8+1/19–20, *+1 light crossbow*); SA rebuke undead 4/day, spells; SQ empathic link with familiar, raven familiar, share spells with familiar, touch (via familiar);AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +11; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 15, Cha 16.

Skills: Appraise +9, Bluff +10, Concentration +11, Diplomacy +11, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (local) +7, Spellcraft +13. *Feats:* Alertness**, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Silver Palm*.

*This feat is found in the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting* and reprinted in the sidebar on page 54 for your convenience.

**Brechtu benefits from this feat only when his familiar is within 5 feet. Bonuses from this feat are not added into the statistics above.

Cleric Spells Prepared (4/4/3; base save DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds, detect magic, resistance, virtue*; 1st—*cause fear, command*†, cure light wounds, shield of faith*; 2nd—*hold person*†, scare**, spiritual weapon*.

*Domain spell. *Domains:* Hatred (gain +2 profane bonus to attack rolls, saving throws, and Armor class against one opponent for 1 minute), Tyranny (save DCs for compulsion spells increase by +2).

†Compulsion spell. The base save DC for these spells is 14 + spell level.

Wizard Spells Prepared (5/5/4; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*daze***, detect magic, mage hand, open/close, prestidigitation*; 1st—*charm person*** ×2, hypnotism***†, shield, sleep***†; 2nd—*invisibility, Tasha's hideous laughter***† ×2, touch of idiocy***.

Spellbook: 0—all (except *acid splash, disrupt undead,* and *touch of fatigue*); 1st—*charm person***, expeditious retreat, hypnotism***†, shield, sleep***†; 2nd—*alter self, darkvision, detect thoughts, invisibility, see invisibility, Tasha's hideous laughter***†, touch of idiocy***†.

**Enchantment spell. Brechtu's forbidden schools are Conjuration and Necromancy.

†Compulsion spell. The base save DC for these spells is 15 + spell level.

Possessions: +1 quarterstaff, +1 light crossbow with 20 crossbow bolts, *amulet of natural armor +1, ring of protection +1, bracers of armor +1, potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of invisibility,* scroll of *pyrotechnics,* scroll of *darkness,* scroll of *see invisibility,* scroll of *fog cloud, wand of cure light wounds* (41 charges), *wand of Snilloc's snowball swarm* (21 charges).

Xvim, Raven Familiar: CR —; Tiny Magical Beast; HD 7 (effective); hp 17; Init +2; Spd 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (average); AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 14; BAB +4; Grap –9; Atk/Full Atk +8 melee (1d2–5, claw); Space/Reach 2 1/2 ft./0 ft.; SA deliver touch spells; SQ empathic link with master, improved evasion, low-light vision, share spells; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +9; Str 1, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 7, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills: Appraise –1, Bluff +3, Concentration +10, Diplomacy +4, Intimidate +1, Knowledge (arcana) +2, Knowledge (local) +2, Listen +3, Spellcraft +8, Spot +5. *Feats:* Weapon Finesse (claw).

Olef and Ermilhk, Zhentarim Soldiers, Male Human Ftr4 (4): CR 4; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 4d10+4; hp 31 each; Init +4; Spd 30 ft. (50 ft. when mounted); AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16; BAB +4; Grap +6; Atk/Full Atk +8 melee (1d10+2/19–20, masterwork bastard sword) or +7 ranged

(1d6+2/×3, masterwork composite shortbow [+2 Str]); AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Skills: Handle Animal +6, Intimidate +1, Jump +8†, Ride (horse) +11. *Feats:* Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Thug*, Weapon Focus (bastard sword).

*This feat is found in the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting* and reprinted in the sidebar on page 54 for your convenience.

†Includes –1 armor check penalty.

Possessions: +1 chain shirt, masterwork buckler, masterwork bastard sword, masterwork composite shortbow [+2 Str] with 20 arrows, *cloak of resistance +1, potion of bull's strength, potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of bear's endurance, everburning torch,* light warhorse.

Tactics: Brechtu prepares for the fight by casting *shield* and *shield of faith* on himself (he shares these spells with Xvim, his familiar), and *invisibility* on Xvim. The bodyguards drink their *bull's strength* and *bear's endurance* potions. These preparations change the Zhents' statistics as noted below:

Zhent Power-up Suite: Brechtu and Company

Brechtu: AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 19.

Xvim: AC 22, touch 20, flat-footed 20.

Olef and Ermilhk, Zhentarim Soldiers: hp 39 each; Atk/Full Atk +10 melee (1d10+4/19–20, masterwork bastard sword); SV Fort +8; Str 18, Con 15.

The Zhents smile and wave, then trot within range of the fighters' bows (70 feet). Once in range, the fighters loose arrows (they suffer a –2 attack penalty for firing while mounted) and Brechtu uses his wand of *Snilloc's snowball swarm* (see the sidebar) on the party, placing the burst to cover as many foes as possible.

After their initial attack, the fighters either scatter and pepper the PCs with arrows (if their initial volley seems to have inflicted any harm), or charge in to use their swords and their Ride-By Attack feats. (In melee, they receive a +1 bonus against opponents on foot.) If they find their ranged attacks ineffective and also have difficulty making Ride-By attacks, they try to maneuver their mounts so they can make flanking attacks against their foes. Any fighter who loses his mount fights as well as he can on foot.

After the second round, the bodyguards continue to press their attacks. Brechtu casts *Tasha's hideous laughter* on fighter types in the PC's group (his first target will be a character who is chopping up his bodyguards). Brechtu uses *command* (surrender) or *scare* on anyone who gets within melee reach. If he doesn't have a good target for his *Tasha's hideous laughter* spells, he casts *spiritual weapon*. Against mounted foes, Brechtu might try a *sleep* spell against an enemy mount or additional *Snilloc's snowball swarms* in an effort to disable enemy steeds.

If the battle starts going against his group, Brechtu tries to use his scrolls to block the enemy's vision while the group retreats. Brechtu's bodyguards flee immediately if Brechtu falls. Likewise, Brechtu flees if all his bodyguards drop.

Development: Once the PCs fight off the attack, they're free to resume whatever activity the Zhents interrupted.

Captured Zhents are hostile and unwilling to talk. They claim to be brigands out to make a quick buck. Brechtu admits nothing if captured. A successful Intimidate or Diplomacy check might prompt Brechtu's bodyguards to talk, and the PC get a +4 circumstance bonus to her checks if the guards are questioned when Brechtu isn't present.

- "We're hired muscle for someone you may know as the merchant Brechtu. He doesn't seem to like you very much."
- "We had nothing to do with that incident involving the wagon and the trolls, but your interest got Brechtu's attention. He didn't want you sticking your noses into the incident."
- "We got paid to watch Brechtu's back, and to keep our eyes and ears open. We weren't the brains of the outfit."

The bodyguards attempt to conceal their identity as Zhent agents as long as possible. They know Brechtu is a cleric of Bane but won't admit it unless confronted with Brechtu's holy symbol or some other incontrovertible proof. If the bodyguards think the PCs have discovered the Zhent connection, they spill the beans:

- "We were sent down here to drive a wedge between the humans of the Dales and the elves—and to cut off the Moonsea ride. We were based in Ashabenford, and there's another group operating in the countryside north of here. We don't know who they are or where they are.

SCENE 6: WAGON LAUNCH SITE

The place where the Zhents started the runaway wagon (**Scenes 1** and **2**) rolling offers a few clues to PCs who find and examine the site. They can easily find the spot if one of the horses that drew the wagon leads them to it. Otherwise, it takes several hours of searching the road outside Ashabenford to find the place.

This looks like the spot. This section of the Moonsea ride seems well used, and you can make no sense of the tangle of wheel ruts and tracks on the road's hard surface. Nevertheless, you've found a few hoofprints at the shoulder of the road, along with a few bits of firewood, some potatoes, and a broken crock of some kind. You also see a set of fresh wheel ruts and hoofprints leading off the road and into the countryside.

When the Zhents halted here to hitch a team of fresh horses to their wagon for its high-speed run into town, an unfortunate farmer and his son came upon them in the fog. The pair had a two-wheeled cart loaded with firewood, some crocks of pickled beets, and a couple sacks of potatoes. They hoped to spend the night in Ashabenford, sell their goods in the morning, and return home before dark. The Zhents quickly dispatched the pair. After sending their wagon into town, the Zhents rummaged through the farmer's cart. They

found nothing to their liking, so they drove the cart into some bushes near the road, then took the farmer's horse and went back to their roadblock (**Scene 8**). The bodies of the farmer and his son lie under the cart.

A Search (DC 10) of the hedge reveals the cart and the arrow-ridden bodies stashed beneath it. A Survival check (DC 15) by a character with the Track feat reveals the approximate age of the ruts and tracks (which varies depending on how long the PCs took to get here—increase the Survival DC accordingly if the PCs have taken a long time to investigate this site), and indicates that one wheeled vehicle must have come from the north, halted here for a short time, then moved on at top speed. A second Survival check (DC 15) near the hedge reveals that a horse hauled the cart to the hedge, but only the horse returned to the road. At least one troll and at least a dozen light and heavy horses made the tracks. A Survival or Search check that exceeds DC 20 reveals the broken shaft of an arrow and a few drops of blood on the road. The arrow looks to be of elven make.

A Survival check by someone with the Track feat made near the hedge (DC 15) reveals the footprints of one Medium humanoid in that area at about the same time all the other tracks were made.

Development: This is a good place for Brechtu and his confederates to waylay the PCs (see **Scene 5**).

A *speak with dead* spell cast on body of the farmer or the son reveals their story. They don't know exactly who killed them, but they heard their attackers speaking in Elven.

The Zhents left this place and headed north, moving at a speed of 50 (thanks to the heavy horses in their train). It's possible that the PCs might catch up with them if they came here the same night as the wagon incident, and if they press ahead right away (maintaining an overland speed greater than 50). The Zhent party, led by the cleric Suddilis, poses as a group of merchants trying to carry a shipment of goods to Hillsfar without delay. If the PCs catch them, they claim to have seen a group of cavalry gallop by them only a few minutes before the PCs arrived (Suddilis attempts a Bluff check—the PCs can uncover the deception with a successful opposed Sense Motive check). The "merchants" assumed these horsemen where riders of Mistledale on some important errand, so they just got out of the way and let them by.

If the PCs fight the Zhents, use the statistics from **Scene 8**, except that the group doesn't include a troll and Suddilis has the following spells instead of those listed in **Scene 8**: 0—*cure minor wounds* ×2, *detect magic*, *resistance*, *virtue*; 1st—*cause fear*, *command*†*, *doom*†, *shield of faith*; 2nd—*hold person*† ×2, *scare**, *shatter**; 3rd—*contagion**, *prayer*.

SCENE 7: LUMBER CAMP

Teegahn's woodcutters are busy cutting trees and sawing the trunks into lumber in this area. As noted earlier, the camp is located at the edge of the forest about 20 miles northwest of Ashabenford. It takes about a day to walk from the town to the camp, or about half a day to ride the distance.

The camp's condition when the PCs visit depends largely on when they visit and on what has happened before that. A group of drow raiders from the Underdark has moved into the area recently, and they attack the camp the night after the incident with the wagon in Ashabenford (**Scene 1**). If the PCs arrive here before then, they find that all is as well as can be expected. If they come later, they find the camp in an uproar or worse.

Teegahn planned to take a wagonload of supplies to the camp the morning following the wagon incident, and if Teegahn keeps his intended schedule, he arrives at the camp just before the raid and can organize a defense sufficient to drive off the drow. However, Brechtu plans to kill Teegahn when he leaves town, and he does so unless the PCs stop him, either by dealing with Brechtu before he can act, by accompanying Teegahn, or by drawing Brechtu's attention to themselves.

If neither Teegahn nor the PCs are present during the attack, the people in the camp fall victim to the drow raiders. Should the PCs come here after a successful drow raid, they find nothing but the burnt-out shell of the stockade.

The following description assumes all is well when the PCs arrive:

> The winter air carries the scent of woodsmoke as you follow a muddy track into the forest. About a quarter mile into the trees, you see a low stockade made of green logs with sharpened tops. Inside you see the plank roof of a long, two-story building and a crude watchtower occupied by two sentries armed with bows. A curl of smoke rises from somewhere inside the stockade walls.
>
> Outside the stockade, you see several open-sided buildings, also with plank roofs, that contain stacks of lumber. Several teams of men are hard at work sawing logs into boards.

The major areas in the camp are as follows:

2A. COURTYARD

This area has become quite muddy thanks to all the traffic (both man and horse) that passes through here. The smoke the PCs saw and smelled comes from two big cooking fires the crew keeps burning day and night. The only ways into the camp are over the walls or through the gate to the west.

The stockade wall is about 10 feet high and made out of whole logs with sharpened tops. The wall has no rampart or catwalk for guards to patrol. Anyone climbing the wall must slip over the top and down the other side. The sharpened logs pose a hazard to anyone trying that maneuver. A Reflex save (DC 15) is required when crossing the top. Failure results in 1d6 points of subdual damage. Anyone who takes damage must make an immediate Climb check (DC 21) or fall back down on the side he started up, taking 1d6 points of falling damage.

Stockade Walls: 12 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 120; break DC 24; Climb DC 21.

Gates: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; break DC 25 (when barred).

2B. WATCHTOWER

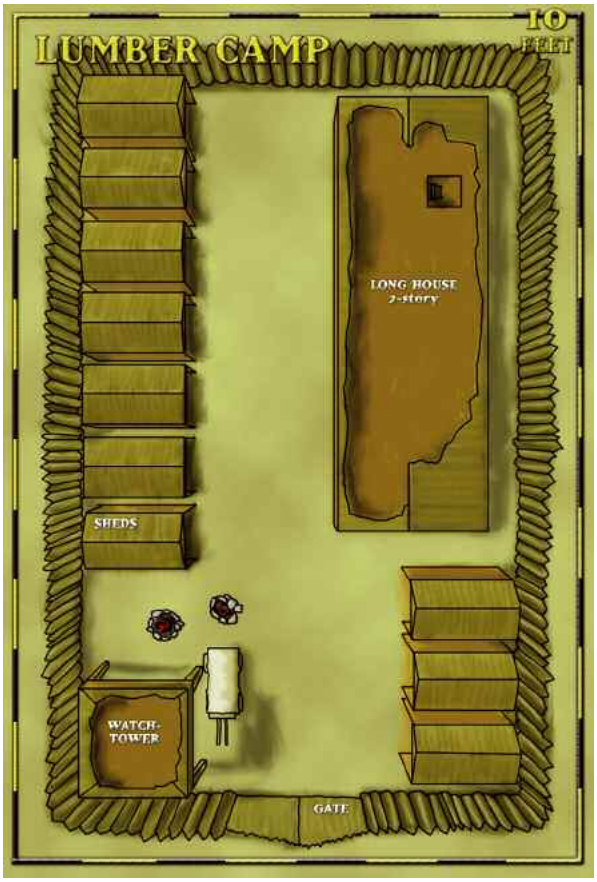
This building is essentially a log hut, 15 feet square, set on stilts 25 feet high. A ladder leads from the ground to a trapdoor in the hut's floor. Each wall has an opening about 6 feet square, and each opening is equipped with a pair of shutters that can be closed, leaving only a narrow slit. A character standing in the opening has cover (+4 to AC) with the shutters open and is almost completely concealed (+8 AC) with the shutter closed.

Watchtower Walls: 12 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 120; break DC 20; Climb DC 21.

Shutters: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; break DC 25 (when barred).

2C. COOK WAGON

This wagon is similar to the wagon from **Scene 1**, except that it is equipped with various cooking implements and food stores. All the cooking for the camp is done at the fires nearby.



2D. LONG HOUSE.

This two-story building is built in the same fashion as the watch tower, minus the stilts. Its ground floor serves as a stable for the camp's draft animals and storage for animal fodder. The sole entrances are two sets of double doors in the south wall.

Ladders lead to a one-room loft above the stable. Here, the workers sleep, eat, and relax. Every 20-foot section of wall on the upper floor has an opening about 6 feet square. These are identical to the openings in the watchtower (right down to the shutters). A hoist at the east end of the south wall serves as a dumbwaiter. Several charcoal braziers and torches bearing *continual flame* spells provide heat and light.

2E. DRYING SHACKS (EL 10)

These open-sided buildings hold stacks of drying lumber. The camp has 10 of these; none are quite full yet.

Creatures: Some sixteen Mistledale farmers work in the camp, although only a half dozen are present during most daylight hours (two guards in the tower, the cook, and few sawing logs); the rest are spread out over the countryside cutting trees. The whole gang gathers for three meals a day, and everyone is inside the stockade by nightfall. Each worker takes his turn on guard and cook wagon duty.

Owing to the constant threat of drow raids, the workers always go around armed and armored, although only people on guard duty have their weapons handy.

Lumberjacks, Male and Female Human Com2/Exp1 (16): CR 3; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 2d4 plus 1d6; hp 9 each; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12; Atk/Full Atk +1 melee (1d8/×3, longspear), or +1 melee (1d4/19–20, dagger), or +1 ranged (1d8/×3, longbow); AL NG; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +2; Str 11, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Handle Animal +5, Heal +3, Profession (farmer) +6, Ride (horse) +2, Spot +2, Survival +2, Use Rope +4. *Feats:* Blooded, Forester, Militia.

Possessions: Leather armor, longspear, dagger, longbow with 10 arrows, axe.

As noted earlier, a drow raiding party from the Underdark lurks in the woods near the camp. The drow stay hidden during daylight, but attack the camp after moonset one night after **Scene 1**.

The drow leader is Vrinrea, a slaver and ruthless opponent who has lead her band into Mistledale to take advantage of the unsettled state of affairs here. She has no connection to or interest in the Zhents' plan for the Dale, nor does she care one whit about the surface drow activity in the Dale.

Vrinrea, Female Drow Ftr4: CR 5; Medium Humanoid (elf); HD 4d10+4; hp 31; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 19; BAB +4; Grap +7; Atk/Full Atk +9 melee (1d10+3/19–20, masterwork bastard sword) or +7 ranged (1d6+3/×3, masterwork composite shortbow [+2 Str] with +1 *arrows*); SQ drow traits; SR 15; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +9*, Hide +4, Jump +9*, Listen +3, Move Silently +4, Search +3, Spot +3, Swim +8. *Feats:* Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Mobility, Stealthy, Weapon Focus (bastard sword).

*Includes –1 armor check penalty (–2 for Swim).

Possessions: +1 mithral chain shirt, +1 large steel shield, masterwork bastard sword, masterwork composite shortbow [+2 Str] with 20 *+1 arrows, cloak of resistance +1, ring of protection +1, potion of haste, potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of bear's endurance.*

Languages: Elven, Giant, Undercommon.

Vrinrea's lover and second in command is Elac; he provides magical firepower for the group.

Elac, Male Drow Evo5: CR 6; Medium Humanoid (elf); HD 5d4; hp 17; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 11; BAB +2; Grap +2; Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (1d6, masterwork quarterstaff), or +6 ranged (1d8+1/19–20, masterwork light crossbow with *+1 bolts*), or +5 ranged (damage varies, ranged touch); SA spells; SQ drow traits; SR 16; AL CE; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Concentration +8, Decipher Script +6, Hide +9, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (geography) +11, Listen +3, Move Silently +9, Search +3, Spellcraft +12, Spot +3. *Feats:* Empower Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Evocation), Stealthy.

Spells Prepared (5/5/4/3; base save DC = 14 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, flare*† ×2, *ghost sound, resistance;* 1st—*expeditious retreat, grease, magic missile*† ×2, *mage armor;* 2nd—*invisibility, resist energy* ×2, *scorching ray*†; 3rd—*fireball*†, *lightning bolt*†, empowered *magic missile*†.

Spellbook: 0—all except *daze* and *disrupt undead;* 1st—*endure elements, expeditious retreat, feather fall, grease, identify, mage armor, magic missile*†, *Tenser's floating disk*†; 2nd—*blur, detect thoughts, flaming sphere*†, *fog cloud, invisibility, scorching ray*†; 3rd—*fireball*†, *Leomund's tiny hut*†, *lightning bolt*†.

†Evocation spell. The base save DC for these spells, where applicable, is 15 + spell level. Elac's prohibited schools are Enchantment and Necromancy

Possessions: Masterwork quarterstaff, masterwork light crossbow with 20 *+1 bolts, cloak of resistance +1, ring of protection +1, potion of blur, potion of cure moderate wounds, wand of magic missile* (5th-level, 22 charges), *wand of lightning bolt* (34 charges)

Vrinrea and Elac command four fighter/rogues and a troll.

Drow Raiders, Male and Female Drow Rog1/Ftr1: CR 3; Medium Humanoid (elf); HD 1d6+1 plus 1d10+1; hp 14; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15; BAB +1; Grap +2; Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+1/18–20, masterwork rapier) or +5 ranged (1d6+2/×3, masterwork composite shortbow [+1 Str] with *+1 arrows*); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ drow traits, trapfinding; SR 13; AL CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Bluff +3, Climb +3*, Escape Artist +4*, Hide +5*, Jump +3*, Listen +7, Move Silently +5*, Search +5, Spot +7, Swim +0*, Tumble +5*. *Feats:* Weapon Finesse (rapier), Weapon Focus (rapier).

*Includes –2 armor check penalty (–4 for Swim).

Possessions: Chain shirt, masterwork buckler, masterwork rapier, masterwork composite shortbow [+1 Str] with 20 *+1 arrows, potion of cure light wounds.*

See the *Monster Manual* (Elf entry) for a description of drow traits.

Troll: hp 63; *Monster Manual* 247.

Tactics: The drow intend to attack the camp about 3 hours after midnight when the moon has set. The clear night sky gives some starlight, but not much, and the campfires shed some light as well. Without darkvision, a character can see clearly only 30 feet. Creatures and objects more than 30 feet, but less than 60 feet away, have 50% concealment; anything more than 60 feet away has total concealment. Characters with low-light vision see twice as far. Characters with darkvision can see clearly to the limit of their darkvision range (the drow can see 120 feet).

The drow fighter/rogues creep up to the east wall of the stockade under cover of darkness and quietly place wooden ladders they've lashed together against the wall. Then they quietly climb the ladders and hunker down behind the top of the wall. Neither Teegahn (if he is present) nor his lumberjacks see or hear this.

The attackers take 10 on Move Silently and Hide checks. Any PC who is awake and watching can make a Listen check (DC 20) to hear the drow; the DC increases by +1 for every 10 feet of distance between the drow and the listener. A PC might also see the drow hiding at the top of the wall. A Spot check (DC 15) reveals the drow, provided the drow do not have total concealment because of the darkness. Add 5 to the DC if the drow have 50% concealment from the darkness and also add 1 to the DC for every 10 feet between the spotter and the drow.

Meanwhile, Vrinrea, Elac, and the troll hide at the edge of the forest about 200 feet from the gate. Elac begins the encounter with *mage armor* cast on himself; he then casts *resist energy* (fire) on Vrinrea, and the troll. Vrinrea drinks her *potion of haste* and Elac drinks his *potion of blur*. Once that is done, Vrinrea drinks her *potion of bear's endurance*, then she and the troll run for the gate while Elac blasts it with *lightning bolts* from his wand. If the first bolt does not shatter the gate, Vrinrea and the troll try to kick it down; once the gate loses half its hit points, its break DC drops by 4 (to 21). Vrinrea uses the Aid Another action to assist while the troll tries to break down the gate.

Drow Power-up Suite

Vrinrea: hp 39; Spd 60 ft.; Atk/Full Atk +10 melee (1d10+3/19–20, masterwork bastard sword) or +8 ranged (1d6+3/×3, masterwork composite shortbow [+2 Str] with +1 arrows); AC 22, touch 14, flat-footed 20; SV Fort +8, Con 16.

Elac: AC 18, touch 18, flat-footed 15. Attacks against Elac have a 20% miss chance.

Both Vrinrea and the troll have fire resistance 10.

Elac keeps blasting the gate while Vrinrea and the troll keep trying to break through. They keep at it until they succeed.

Meanwhile, the fighter/rogues shoot arrows at anyone who tries to defend the gate. Against targets within 30 feet who are unaware of the drow's presence, these will be sneak attacks. The fighter/rogues have cover (+4 AC) while crouching behind the stockade.

Once inside the courtyard, Vrinrea and the troll single out a foe and double-team him. The troll moves in for a direct attack while Vrinrea maneuvers to flank. Elac moves closer to the action, ready to cast an area effect spell on the first clump of opponents he sees, and the drow on the wall keep up their arrow fire.

On subsequent rounds, Vrinrea and the troll press their attacks while Elac tries to use his remaining spells to best effect. He saves his Empowered *magic missile* for an opponent menacing Vrinrea. The fighter/rogues shoot from the wall as long as they can. If counterattacked, two of them blanket their foes with *darkness* effects, while the remaining raiders climb over the wall and jump down into the courtyard. If they avoid falling off the wall when climbing over the top, they can avoid all damage from the jump with successful Jump checks (DC 15). They take only 1d6 points of subdual damage even if their Jump checks fail. The drow who use *darkness* follow their comrades into the courtyard as soon as they can. Once on the ground inside the courtyard, the fighter/rogues enter melee with their foes and Tumble to flank and set up sneak attacks. If this strategy proves ineffective, they try to set up sneak attacks using feints (see the Bluff skill description in the *Player's Handbook*, page 67).

The drow and the troll fight as long as Vrinrea is still alive and conscious. If Vrinrea falls, the troll and remaining raiders try to flee; the rogues use their *darkness* effects (if they have any available) to conceal themselves. Elac, however, loses his head and keeps attacking, using his wand if he runs out of spells. Vrinrea orders a retreat if she is reduced to 10 hit points or less, or if all her minions drop. Vrinrea uses her own *darkness* ability to cover a withdrawal.

If Teegahn is present during the attack, he orders his people to watch for enemy reinforcements and concentrates his own efforts against the group attacking the gate. The two guards in the tower fire their bows at the trio attacking the gate, while six other lumberjacks try to deal with the fighter/rogues. The lumberjacks won't be too effective in the darkness, but the PCs could change that by throwing out a light source.

If the PCs arrive here either before or after the drow attack, they might still encounter the drow, especially if they go poking around in the woods. The drow use the same tactics noted above, although they have less time to prepare.

Development: Once the PCs finish their business at the camp, they can search the surrounding woods. If Teegahn is with the party, he can show them where the boundary markers (see **Scene 3**) have been destroyed or moved. Without Teegahn's aid, it takes the party at least a day to locate the markers. A Survival check (DC 30) by a character with the Track feat reveals one very old footprint near a destroyed boundary

marker. It looks like a humanoid footprint, slightly too large to have been made by any elf.

Should the PCs manage to capture the troll or any of the drow after the attack on the camp, the captives might answer a few of the PCs' questions:

- "We came looking for slaves and plunder. We don't care who controls Cormanthor. We'll raid whomever takes control."
- "Boundary markers? What boundary markers? We don't care about any stinking boundary markers."
- "We hear from our allies that a band of humans wearing silly elf ears have been recruiting trolls and humanoids for some project of their own around here. We don't know or care what they're up to."

Treasure: If the PCs help defeat the drow, Teegahn (if he's still alive) promises them a reward of 100 gp for every lumberjack whose live was saved. He doesn't have the money right now, but promises to pay in six months (and he's as good as his word).

Ad-hoc XP Award: Increase the experience award for this encounter by 25% because the PCs have to defend the camp at night, and darkness favors the attackers.

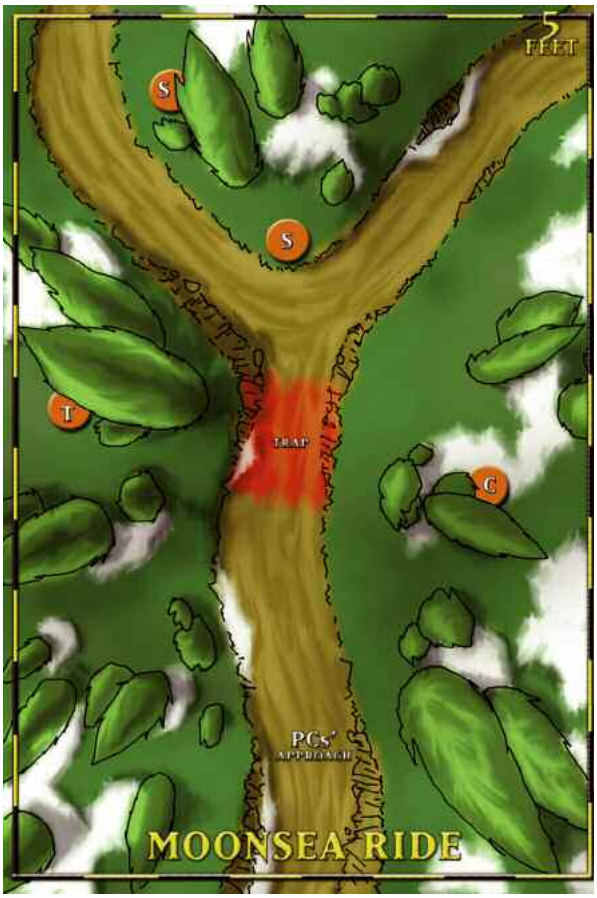
SCENE 8: ROADBLOCK (EL 10)

The group of Zhents posing as elves set up a roadblock to stop traffic along the Moonsea Ride. These same Zhents sent the runaway wagon into Ashabenford and hijacked Ilten Blackeagle's caravan.

If the PCs come looking for the place where the caravan was attacked, they have this encounter first, provided they use the Moonsea Ride to get here.

> The road, which ran fairly straight, smooth, and level through the fields of Mistledale, becomes more rugged once it enters the forest of Cormanthor. It snakes through the trees in endless bends, turns, rises, and dips. Forest debris—from wet leaves to tree trunks and branches—litters the road, along with mounds of slushy snow. As bad as the road is, the land to either side proves even worse; it's crammed with huge trees, some of them more than 6 feet thick, choked with brambles and quite muddy.
>
> You slog along for several hours when you reach a fairly straight and flat section of road, although the surface remains cluttered with snow and sticks. You've barely set foot on the straight section when a figure clad in green steps out from behind a tree.
>
> "Halt!" says the figure in a commanding voice. "Who goes so freely in the forest of Cormanthor? Stand and be recognized!"

The figure is a Zhent soldier doing his best to look like an elf. Xthraxix the imp provided the soldier's disguise; the PCs can detect it with a Spot check (DC 13). Increase the DC by 1 for every 10 feet of distance between the soldier and the PC. The PCs begin the encounter about 60 feet from the soldier.



Creatures: The group guarding this section of the road consists of four Zhent soldiers, a troll, Suddilis (a cleric of Bane), and Xthraxix the imp. Two of the soldiers watch this section of the road, night and day. The other two sleep in a log and earth shelter dug into a hillside about 150 feet off the road.

Zhent Soldier (4): hp 31 each; see page 61 for complete statistics.

The troll helps watch the road at night and sleeps near the road during daylight.

Troll: hp 63; *Monster Manual* 247.

Suddilis commands this group. He remains near the road for about 14 hours a day, from about 2 hours before dawn until about 2 hours after dusk. At other times, he rests or sleeps in the shelter.

Suddilis, Male Human Clr7 (Bane): CR 7; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 7d8+14; hp 50; Init +2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 22, touch 10, flat-footed 22; BAB +5; Grap +6; Atk/Full Atk +7 melee (1d8+2, +1 *morningstar*) or +5 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); SA rebuke undead 4/day (+3 to rebuke checks), spells; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +11; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 12.

Skills: Concentration +10, Diplomacy +2, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (religion) +5, Spellcraft +9. *Feats:* Brew Potion, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll, Thug*.

*This feat is found in the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting* and reprinted in the sidebar on page 54 for your convenience.

Spells Prepared: (6/6/5/4/2; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds* ×2, *detect magic, light, resistance, virtue*; 1st—*bane, cause fear, command*†*, *cure light wounds, doom*†, *shield of faith*; 2nd—*hold person*† ×2, *scare**, *sound burst, spiritual weapon*; 3rd—*contagion**, *prayer, searing light* ×2; 4th—*fear**, *poison*.

*Domain spell. *Domains:* Destruction (smite 1/day), Tyranny (save DCs for compulsion spells increase by +2).

†Compulsion spell. The base save DC for these spells is 15 + spell level.

Possessions: +2 *full plate*, large steel shield, +1 *morningstar*, light crossbow with 10 bolts, *pearl of power* (1st level), scroll of five *cure light wounds*, scroll of *silence*, scroll of *magic vestment*, *potion of blur*.

Xthraxix serves as companion and advisor to Suddilis. He also serves as the group's trapmaker and disguise expert. Xthraxix helps with the road each night form dusk to dawn, and spends his days in the shelter.

Xthraxix, Male Imp Rog3: CR 5; Tiny Outsider (lawful, evil); HD 3d8 plus 3d6; hp 23; Init +8; Spd 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect); AC 22, touch 17, flat-footed 18; BAB +5; Grap –3; Atk/Full Atk +11 melee (1d4 plus poison, sting); Space/Reach 2 1/2 ft./0 ft.; SA poison, sneak attack +2d6, spell-like abilities; SQ alternate form, DR 5/silver or holy, evasion, fast healing 2, fire resistance 5, immune to poison, outsider traits, trapfinding, trap sense +1; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +10, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills: Balance +10, Craft (trapmaking) +6, Diplomacy +8, Escape Artist +7, Hide +18, Knowledge (the planes) +6, Listen +7, Move Silently +10, Search +6, Spellcraft +6, Spot +7, Survival +1 (+3 when following tracks), Tumble +7. *Feats:* Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse (sting).

See the *Monster Manual*, page 56, for a complete description of the imp's special abilities.

Possessions: Ring of protection +1, disguise kit.

Tactics: The Zhents stop everyone they see moving along the Moonsea Ride (except other Zhents). The party starts at the point marked "P" on the encounter map. The soldiers start at the points marked "S" on the encounter map. Initially, one of the soldiers watching the road hails the PCs and demands to know who they are and what they're doing here. The other soldier stays out of sight behind a tree. The soldier is not much interested in the party's answer, or even in successfully masquerading as an elf. Instead, he just wants to delay the party until his allies can get to the scene of the impending fight. The soldier continues questioning the group in a loud voice until his companions arrive on the scene or until the PCs attack (whichever comes first). Once the fight commences, the second soldier appears, and the pair attacks as best they can. If the PCs don't trigger the trap the Zhents have set (see below), the soldiers can trigger it themselves with the tug of a rope. Otherwise, the soldiers use their bows or swords as the situation warrants. In either case, they concentrate on one target at a time.

The other Zhents remain fairly alert, even when at rest. Any Zhent near the road can join the fight in 1 round. Zhents in the shelter need 1 round to notice what is going on, plus time it actually takes them to prepare and cover the 150 feet to the road (see below).

The troll, who is always near the road (the point marked "T"), moves straight toward any intruders and attacks the closest foe. Any soldiers on the scene try to converge on the troll's opponent and set up flanking positions.

The soldiers in the shelter sleep in their armor (they suffer no ill effects due to the armor's low armor check penalty), and they quickly mount a pair of light warhorses they keep saddled and ready. They can ride to the road in 2 rounds. Once they get there, they use the same tactics as the bodyguards in **Scene 5**.

When on watch, Suddilis can reach the road in 1 round (he starts at the point marked "C"). Before joining the fight, however, he casts *shield of faith* on himself. When he arrives at the fight, he casts *prayer*. After that, he alternates between casting *searing light* and *hold person* on whomever he deems most dangerous. If anyone come within melee reach, be uses his *contagion* and *poison* spells, and his smite ability. If hard pressed, he drinks his *potion of blur*.

If the party appears while Suddilis is in the shelter (at night), the cleric isn't wearing his armor. Suddilis uses his scroll of *magic vestment* on himself, then casts *shield of faith*. Once he's done that, he mounts a light warhorse and rides to the road, arriving in 2 rounds. Suddilis is no horseman, however, and he dismounts when he reaches the fight. Once on the scene, he uses the same tactics described above.

Suddilis's statistics during this encounter depend on when the encounter occurs. See below for details.

Suddilis Power-up Suite

Day: AC 25, touch 13, flat-footed 25.

Night: AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 14.

In addition, Suddilis and any ally affected by his *prayer* spell gains a +1 luck bonus to attack rolls, weapon damage rolls, saves, and skill checks. Foes affected by the *prayer* spell have a –1 penalty to such rolls.

When on watch, Xthraxix the imp can reach the combat in 1 round (he starts at the point mark "I" on the map—the same place Suddilis rests). He tries to remain hidden. He uses his *suggestion* ability (go cower behind a tree) on the first enemy he sees. Thereafter, he uses *invisibility* to get sneak attacks against the PCs. After each melee attack, he withdraws, becomes invisible, then returns for another attack. If reduced to 6 hit points or less, he retreats and waits for his fast healing power to bring him back to full strength.

If the party arrives while Xthraxix is in the shelter, the imp assumes raven form, and flies to the scene of the fight in 2 rounds, whereupon he uses the tactics described above.

Trap (EL 2): The Zhents have cut two massive oak logs and hung them in the trees over the road here.

Log Pendulum Trap: CR 2; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; 4d6 damage; Reflex saving throw (DC 20) avoids; multiple targets (all within a 10-foot by 40-foot area); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20).

Notes: A collection of forest debris and snow covers several triggers (each marked by an "X" on the map), any one of which sends both logs swinging down like massive pendulums to hit almost anything on the road. The trap is triggered when any creature moves through one of the marked spaces. Any member of the Zhent group also can trigger the trap by tugging on ropes places in the spaces marked "R." Anyone in the affected area (the shaded area on the map) must make a Reflex save (DC 20) or be struck and knocked prone by the logs. A creature struck suffers 4d6 points of damage. A successful saving throw negates the damage, but the creature must either drop prone so the log passes overhead, or jump to the side.

Development: Any Zhents the PCs capture in this scene give the same kinds of responses as the Zhents in **Scene 5**.

If the PCs defeat the Zhents in this encounter, they have completed the adventure unless Brechtu is still at large. In the latter case, Brechtu eventually attempts to waylay the PCs (he may catch up with them while they recover from this encounter).

In any case, the PCs might want to visit the scene of the attack on Ilten's caravan (**Scene 9**) if they haven't done so already.

Treasure: The Zhent have a strongbox in their shelter containing 2,000 gp, 8 waterstars (100 gp each), and 60 1-pound gold trade bars (50 gp each). The shelter also holds many crates and bales of trade goods, including several hundred pounds of grain, pickled beets, and ale (all goods from Ilten's caravan), and many bales of wool and cotton cloth (goods Brechtu added to Ilten's caravan). The total value of these goods is about 2,800 gp. The PCs can resell these goods for 1,400 gp. If they return them to Ashabenford, they can collect a reward for their recovery of 2,000 gp. In addition, eighteen heavy horses are hobbled in the shelter, and six wagons are hidden in the woods nearby. The PCs can sell the animals and wagons for 1,900 gp or collect 2,200 gp if they return them to Ashabenford. The PCs also find nine human captives (survivors from the caravan attack), all 1st-level commoners or warriors. The PCs collect a reward of 100 gp for each captive returned to Ashabenford.

SCENE 9: CARAVAN ATTACK SITE

The site of the Zhents' attack on Ilten's caravan lies nearly 100 miles north of Ashabenford. The site lies well within the forest of Cormanthor, and not far from the Moonsea Ride.

There isn't much the PCs can learn here. A search of the area reveals the graves of many humans and horses, as well as three smashed wagons. A Search or Survival check (DC 20) reveals the broken shafts of many arrows and some faint hoofprints, wheel ruts, and other tracks leaving the site and heading south along the Moonsea Ride (the Zhents left these when they hauled their loot back to their camp (**Scene 8**).

Development: If Brechtu hasn't confronted the PCs yet, he might catch up with them here (see **Scene 5**). Otherwise, the PCs can attempt to follows the Zhents back south, which leads them to the roadblock (**Scene 8**). If the PCs have dealt with the Zhents at the roadblock already, a search of the graves here reveals that all the caravan personnel, dead or alive, are accounted for.

CONCLUSION

If the PCs manage to defeat both Brechtu and the Zhents at the roadblock they become celebrities in Mistledale for at least a short time, and they're invited to be guests of the town during the upcoming Greengrass festivities. If the PCs also successfully stopped the Zhents in "The Raiders of Galath's Roost" in issue #87, they'll be made honorary citizens of the Dale.

Alas, Mistledale's problems aren't over. The drow raids continue and any Zhents who have escaped (particularly Brechtu and Suddilis) quickly resume their activities in the Dale. Continuing adventures might include:

• The PCs get wind of a big gathering of troll tribes in the forest between Mistledale and the ruins of Myth Drannor. The PCs are asked to find out what's going on and disrupt the troll's plans if possible. The trolls are massing for attacks on Mistledale, or maybe even an outright invasion (perhaps Brechtu and Suddilis are involved in the plan).

• The PCs are told that Brechtu spent considerable time near Horsewater Pool in Ashabenford. The pool is a popular gathering place for the folk of the town. If the PCs search the area, they find a hollow hidden under a rock. In the hollow, they find a note written in Brechtu's hand that details Brechtu's plans regarding the PCs and Teegahn. Brechtu was instructed to drop reports of his activities here. Arvien Blackhair has been picking up the reports, though she is wise enough to avoid picking up this one. If the PCs discover the report, Arvien begins a cat and mouse game with the PCs, seeking to kill or distract the party without revealing her true role in Ashabenford.

• The authorities in Ashabenford decide it's high time the town had a reliable copy of the Dales Compact, and they offer the PCs the job of securing one. The only complete copies are in Candlekeep and Evereska (despite what Teegahn told the PCs in **Scene 3**, there isn't a copy in Shadowdale). Of course, the Zhents do whatever they can to interfere with the party's mission.

• The PCs attend the Greengrass festivities and the Zhents frame them for a crime. (Most likely a murder, perhaps of Jarrod Rold, or a major theft.)

Skip Williams, better known as Dragon Magazine's *"Sage," confesses that the Dales are his favorite region in the Realms. Skip tells us that he drew some of the details for this adventure from tales of the logging camps in his native Wisconsin.*

CRITICAL THREATS

BY JONATHAN TWEET
ARTWORK BY TOM FOWLER

HUNGASH

Without warning, a glowing, red pea drops out of the clear blue sky and explodes into a *fireball*, catching the PCs unaware. For the better part of a minute, more *fireballs*, plus *ice storms* and *magic missiles*, rain down on the party, while the sound of beating drums measures out their doom. Above them is their assailant, invisible, unknown, and nearly untouchable. Suddenly, the barrage stops.

Maybe that's the last they suffer at the hands of Hungash, hobgoblin wizard and mercenary. Or maybe he'll be back tomorrow for another assault.

Hungash has studied hard and fought many battles to achieve the power he possesses. With his reputation as a reliable mercenary and his ample spellbook, he is able to command high prices from evil warlords and villains. They pay him to rain down fury on their foes, and Hungash takes a special glee in seeing his targets fall helpless before him.

TACTICS

Hungash has worked out his tactics in his laboratory and practiced them in the field. His standard assault plan is as follows:

First, he travels to within a mile or two of the site that he plans to attack. To prepare for the assault, he casts *mage armor*, *invisibility*, and *see invisibility* on himself. Then he makes his way to the site, locates his targets, casts *fly*, achieves an altitude of about 500 feet, and casts his shorter duration spells: *bear's endurance*, *shield*, *ghost sound*, and finally *improved invisibility*. He sets *ghost sound* to start at an inaudible volume and to grow in 2 rounds into loud, ominous drumming. (The *ghost sound* makes it nearly impossible for those on the ground to hear Hungash's magic words as he speaks his spells. Plus, Hungash thinks it's stylish to kill people with drums pounding.)

Hungash, Male Hobgoblin Wiz9: CR 9; Medium Humanoid (goblinoid); HD 9d4+30; hp 48; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 12; Atk +3 melee (1d6–1, quarterstaff) or +7 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); SA spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., familiar (toad); AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +10; Str 8, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 19, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Concentration +15 (+19 with Combat Casting), Knowledge (arcana) +15, Listen +4, Move Silently +7, Spellcraft +17, Spot +7. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Still Spell, Toughness.

Wizard Spells Prepared (4/5/5/4/3/1; base save DC = 14 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, ghost sound* ×2, *read magic;* 1st—*mage armor, magic missile* ×3, *shield;* 2nd—*bear's endurance, blur, invisibility* ×2, stilled *magic missile;* 3rd—*fly, fireball* ×3; 4th—*greater invisibility, ice storm* ×2; 5th—*teleport*.

Spellbook: 0—all; 1st—*charm person, color spray, expeditious retreat, mage armor, magic missile, shield, sleep;* 2nd—*bear's endurance , blur, invisibility, see invisibility*; 3rd—*dispel magic, fireball, fly, haste;* 4th—*ice storm, improved invisibility, minor globe of invulnerability, stoneskin;* 5th—*hold monster, teleport*.

Possessions: Quarterstaff, *cloak of resistance +1, headband of intellect +2, ring of protection +1, bracers of armor +1,* scroll of *teleport, potion of cure critical wounds*, packet of diamond dust (three doses for *stoneskin,* 250 gp each).

Before the drums sound, the assault begins. On his surprise round, Hungash drops a *fireball*. For the next 6 rounds, he continues with more offensive magic. On the 8th round, he *teleports* away. Hungash ought to be able to deal up to 250 points of damage to the party, depending on how many people he can catch in area spells.

Hungash is protected from *magic missiles* and out of range of *dispel magic*. His worst nightmare, however, is a wizard with *see invisibility* and *fireball* spells. If faced with such a foe, he tries to kill that character or *teleport* away before his assault is through.

DEVELOPMENT

Hungash amounts to something of a test. Can the characters deal with an enemy that uses tricks and spells to get the better of them? If they can't, they had better learn how. If Hungash escapes unscathed, he'll be back for another assault.

If Hungash is driven off, he may be able to return with some clerical backup. A cleric could "buff him up" with protective spells before he sets out, such as *protection from energy, shield of faith, cat's grace*, and so on. Such a partnership would give Hungash more staying power without endangering the cleric, so even a mid-level cleric would be able to help him without risking a direct confrontation with the party.

Hungash's statistics are typical enough that you could use them as a template for multiple wizards. Imagine this same assault with two, three, or more flying, invisible, *fireballing* wizards. The attack described is especially difficult, so it's EL 10. It's suitable as a single encounter for a 6th- or 7th-level group, or as the climax in a series of encounters for a higher-level party. Ω

STAPLES

BEAST OF BURDEN

BY MICHAEL KORTES

ARTWORK BY GREG STAPLES & JEFF CARLISLE • CARTOGRAPHY BY PETER WHITLEY

"Beast of Burden" is a D&D adventure designed for four 6th-level PCs. While the majority of the encounters are below EL 6, the party will have little opportunity to rest once they board the kadtanach. A balance of character classes is preferable and at least one magic weapon will be handy. Disguise and Climb skills, and the Track feat would be useful but are not necessary.

The adventure's primary setting is a desolate patch of broken wilderness just a few miles beyond a string of small human settlements. The names of the villages are not important and can be changed to fit your campaign.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The adventure's dungeon is a patchwork of armored howdahs saddled on the back of a colossal extraplanar monster. The beast, called the kadtanach, has systematically pillaged local settlements and left a wave of refugees in its wake. The kadtanach is manned by a small army of well-trained gnolls, commanded by a mysterious creature known as the H'Jyord. Kadtanach, pronounced "kad-TA-nak," is the gnoll adjective for "too massive to see all at once."

After assisting a stream of evacuees, the PCs are approached by a crippled battalion of Knights of Heironeous. Fresh from their defeat against the kadtanach, the injured knights encourage the PCs to sneak aboard the kadtanach and destroy it before it reaches the hamlet of Gheldaylin. Once the PCs accept the task, they track the beast cross country, board it in secret, and battle the H'Jyord and his many minions.

BACKGROUND

The kadtanach's rampage can be traced to a horrific accident. For years, Kaya Sylkess, a manipulative wizard, used her magic to bully the local human populace into financing her ambitious research to develop expensive magic items. Eventually, her exploits attracted the attention of the H'Jyord, a celestial hound archon who began a hunt for Sylkess. Desperate to survive her relentless pursuer as the defenses of her dacha crumbled, Sylkess lured the H'Jyord into the depths of her workshop. There she unveiled a hidden *mirror of opposition*. Working its magic, the mirror generated the H'Jyord's evil double: a chaotic evil hound archon. While the duplicates battled one another, Sylkess was finally given the reprieve she needed, and she banished the true archon with a *dismissal* spell.

Unsatisfied with the mere banishment of his double, the H'Jyord opposite became obsessed with perverting his counterpart's original mission. He now seeks to bring immeasurable strife to all the settlements on the borderlands (the former area protected by the original H'Jyord).

Manipulating Sylkess's greed, the evil H'Jyord enticed the wizard into revealing her deceased mentor's greatest unfinished project: a collection of scrolls designed to call and bind a massive extraplanar creature capable of hauling and defending rare, expensive cargo in a fortress it would carry on its back. Although the original ritual was designed to create the ultimate overland merchant caravan, the H'Jyord sought a greater destiny for the monstrous beast. Lured by the H'Jyord's promises of riches, Sylkess completed the experiment.

For his part, the H'Jyord began to recruit gnolls to populate his mobile siege engine. The H'Jyord exploited his canine features to pose as a prophet of Yeenoghu, the gnoll's hyena-headed demon lord. The gnolls follow the H'Jyord with fanatical devotion.

It hasn't hurt the gnolls' loyalty that the H'Jyord's campaign has been, thus far, a complete success. Although the plunder is not plentiful in the wildlands, the humans have been uprooted from their homes in droves. Sylkess has tried to persuade the H'Jyord to lay low for a while before the kadtanach attracts too much attention, but the H'Jyord refuses to lose momentum.

BEGINNING THE ADVENTURE

The adventure begins in the mist of the early morning, as the PCs travel toward a trading outpost known as Szaphdra's Rest.

> You have been making steady progress toward Szaphdra's rest, traveling along an old dried-up riverbed that cuts through the thinning forest. In the distance, from around a bend,

comes a steady stream of human men and woman in tattered clothing. Children number among them, as do a few ponies overloaded with poorly packed supplies. The travelers appear exhausted, and several are wounded.

Refugees of Szaphdra's Rest, Male and Female Human Com1 (46): hp 2–4 each; Atk/Full Atk +0 melee (1d3, unarmed); Craft (any) +4, Profession (any) +4.

This encounter provides an excellent opportunity for the PCs to exercise a few of their non-combat skills. The characters find dozens of villagers in need of healing. But more than broken bones, the refugees suffer from shock, fatigue, and dehydration. The PCs might be anxious about expending too much of their healing or donating away their provisions while traveling so near uncharted regions. To reward their charity, consider granting story award XPs commensurate with their generosity.

The PCs receive confusing accounts of what has happened. The only common thread is that the villagers are from Szaphdra's Rest, and that two days ago a giant beast, with jaws as big as a large house, devastated their community. If pressed for details, one elder traveler (mistakenly) identifies the beast as the tarrasque. The adults who defended the outpost before being driven off describe the beast as carrying an entire castle on its back, filled with snarling humanoids.

Shortly after the PCs have had an opportunity to interact with the refugees, read or paraphrase the following:

You hear the sound of hoofbeats. Several moments later, armed horsemen cut through the trees and gallop into sight ahead. At first it looks as though the helpless villagers are about to be run down as the riders close in, but you quickly realize the riders are in even worse shape than the villagers. Most of the horses carry two riders apiece, as wounded men stripped of their armor cling to less-injured warriors in front. As the battered group closes, you recognize a tattered flag: these are Knights of Heironeous! Spotting you, the lead knight mops his brow, breaks off from the pack, and waves his arm, and heads in your direction.

Knights of Heironeous, Male and Female Human War2 (17): CR 1; HD 2d8+5; hp 14 each (currently 1–12); Init +0; Spd 20 ft; AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; BAB +2; Grap +3; Atk/Full Atk +4 melee (1d8+1/19–20, longsword) or +3 melee (1d8+1/×3, lance); Reach 10 ft. (with lance); AL LG; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will –1; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 11.

Skills: Climb +0*, Handle Animal +5, Ride +7. Feats: Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword).

*Includes –6 armor check penalty.

Possessions: Breastplate, heavy wooden shield, longsword, lance.

Heavy Warhorse (10): hp 30; *Monster Manual* 273.

Despite their wounds, the knights attempt to assist the peasants. Valor Bax, the brigade's replacement for their fallen leader, rides up and meets with the PCs.

Valor Bax, Male Human War4: CR 3; HD 4d8+11; hp 31 (currently 7); Init +1; Spd 20 ft; AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17; BAB +4; Grap +5; Atk/Full Atk +7 (1d8+1/19–20, masterwork longsword) or +5 melee (1d8+1/×3, heavy lance); Reach 10 ft. (with lance); AL LG; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 13, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 13.

Skills: Climb +3*, Handle Animal +8, Ride +8, Swim –2*. *Feats:* Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword).

*Includes –5 armor check penalty (–10 for Swim checks).

Possessions: Masterwork breastplate, heavy steel shield, masterwork longsword, lance, *potion of jump*.

Bax's exhausted stallion pulls a makeshift sled behind it. Inside the sled is a life-sized stone statue of a screaming knight of Heironeous. Fortunately for the PCs, Bax has begun to recover from the shock of his defeat and can explain what has transpired:

- The people of Szaphdra's Rest are only the latest victims in a series of violent raids. Bax can rattle off a list of hamlets and villages that have been "hit."
- A tribe of gnolls has somehow placed armored huts on top of an enormous lizard. The gnolls appear able to steer the creature.
- The gnolls are systematically sweeping through the human settlements, burning any they encounter.
- This group was composed of forty knights when the band set out.

Bax concludes his tale:

"We were on a fool's mission! A frontal strike was suicide. We were showered with arrows, scalded by boiling pitch, and pelted with rocks every time we tried to charge the beast. We figured if we could just lodge a spear in a single ankle-joint we could slow it down, but its hide was impervious to our heaviest lances. It looked slow, but it wasn't."

"They had magic too." He shakes his head and looks at the macabre statue behind his horse. "Some of our horses and men charging the front were transformed into rock by something! Our numbers were cut in half, and when we ran we were picked off. I think if I can get General Trolanadore to a temple, we could get him restored."

"We think the beast is headed for the hamlet of Gheldaylin. Trapped in the open, they won't stand a chance against the beast. We've dispatched a messenger to try and warn them, but we've heard reports of villagers being run down on the road.

Bax then gives a heartfelt pitch to enlist the PCs' aid, by this time having ascertained their profession:

"Now if a smaller group tried to sneak aboard at night, or when the beast stops to feed—it's gotta eat sometime—I think it might be possible to destroy the crew, or at least slow the beast down until we can put together reinforcements."

If the PCs agree, Bax warns them that the beast is capable of great speed. If the PCs are not mounted, Bax orders the knights to lend their four freshest horses to the PCs.

HUNTING THE KADTANACH

If the PCs agree to help the knights, their first task is to locate the kadtanach. Finding the 100-foot-tall beast is not as simple as one would expect. Every time the kadtanach pulls out of an engagement or the gnolls perform their daily garbage dump, Gnu-Dalcom, a gnoll druid (see area 5 below), casts *pass without trace* on the kadtanach, evaporating the beast's gigantic footprints and distinctive smell for the next 50 minutes.

Nevertheless, clever PCs can track the kadtanach by following the signs left by the gnolls escorting the kadtanach on the ground below. The H'Jyord, a gifted tracker himself, however, orders the gnoll patrols to double-back and circle from time to time to throw off pursuit (Survival DC 18 to follow).

Once the PCs close to within one mile of the kadtanach, they can hear and feel the vibrations of the creature's footfalls, granting them a +2 circumstance bonus to any checks made to follow the creature (such as Survival, Spot, or Listen).

Sylkess is convinced that spellcasters from more populated cities will inevitably scry on the kadtanach, determine its weaknesses, and plot its destruction. She tries to stall their efforts by casting *nondetection* once per day at a random interval. The effect lasts for 9 hours and results in a 40% chance that a scrying PC needs to make a caster level check (DC 20) to succeed at any divinations targeting the monster.

As it turns out, Bax was dead-on when he predicted the kadtanach was headed for Gheldaylin. Although the H'Jyord has ordered an indirect course, if the PCs narrow their search pattern to northeast of Szaphdra's Rest and southwest of Gheldaylin, they inevitably pick up the trail.

By the second day after the PCs' encounter with Bax and his knights, the kadtanach traverses Howling Spirit Pass and the H'Jyord orders the gnolls to fire up the kiln in area 11c to prepare heated shot for the kadtanach's catapult. Scouting PCs within seven miles might spy a thin trail of smoke (Spot DC 20). On the eve of the second day, the kadtanach attacks Gheldaylin.

Gheldaylin is a poor place to hit the kadtanach, as the gnoll force will be on alert. If the PCs are too late, they must resume the chase before the kadtanach devastates another settlement. See below for more details on where the PCs intercept the creature.

WILDERNESS MAP KEY

A. REFUGEES

The PCs first encounter the trail of refugees from Szaphdra's Rest and the Knights of Heironeous at this location. By the time the PCs arrive here the kadtanach is already at point "D" and heading northeast.

B. SZAPHDRA'S REST

Displeased with the resistance he encountered here, the H'Jyord ordered Szaphdra's Rest to be burnt to the ground. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs arrive at this ruin:

> Szaphdra's Rest was once a trading post and home to almost a hundred villagers, but it is now a wasteland of rubble and char. You can still feel lingering heat in the ash, hinting that this atrocity must have occurred within the last few days.
>
> In the distance, between the remains of a collapsed parapet less than 100 feet away, you spy a quartet of hairy, armored goblinoids sifting through the rubble. The creatures are combining their efforts to shift a large, burnt wooden beam and have not yet noticed your approach.

Bugbear Looters (4): hp 17, 16 ×2, 13; *Monster Manual* 29.

The bugbears have taken to following a few days behind the kadtanach, gathering up any valuables the gnolls overlook. They also kill any villagers foolish enough to stay behind. The bugbears are engrossed with their search and have failed to keep a

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

"Beast of Burden" is intended for four 6th-level PCs. It can be easily altered for larger or smaller groups, or for higher- or lower-level groups by using the guidelines provided here.

4th- and 5th-level PCs: Slow the kadtanach's travel cross country, allowing the PCs more time to track and catch up with the creature. At lower levels, they're less likely to have magic and resources to make all the skill checks and keep up the level of pursuit necessary to find the creature in a timely fashion. You can also provide the party with some expendable healing items (potions, scrolls, and the like) through the Knights of Heironeous, reducing their need for rest. Also, consider the following changes:

- Drop one gnoll from all multi-gnoll encounters.
- Make Sylkess a 6th- or 7th-level wizard.
- Make Seigonas's tactics more simple and straightforward, and don't have him ambush the PCs in a battle they're already fighting.
- Remove the H'Jyord's fighter levels, making him a normal (although still evil) hound archon.

7th- and 8th-level PCs: Leave the kadtanach's travel speed as is. In addition, Gnu-Dalcom uses *dust of tracelessness* to make the kadtanach harder to find. Also, consider the following changes:

- Increase Sylkess's level to 13th.
- Add a pair of wyverns to the fortress that the gnolls use to make aerial patrols. This makes flying aboard the kadtanach much more difficult.
- Consider giving the H'Jyord some clerical support in the form of an evil cleric of Nerull, Erythnul, or Vecna. This would allow you to replace the smear traps with *glyphs of warding,* which have a higher CR, and add *glyphs of warding* to all the alarm traps.
- Give Seigonas a pair of gargoyle companions, and give him a fighter or barbarian level, or advance his Hit Dice by 2.
- Increase Gnu-Dalcom's level to 6th or 7th.
- Give the H'Jyord 2 more fighter levels, and give him a *+2 chaotic spiked chain*.

Remember that changing the Encounter Levels should raise or lower the amount of treasure in the adventure. Consult page 51 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (Tables **3–3**, **3–4**, and **3–5**) to determine the treasure appropriate to the new encounters.

lookout (–4 penalty to their Spot and Listen checks). If the PCs interrogate the bugbears, they can reveal useful tips for tracking the kadtanach, providing the PCs with a +4 circumstance bonus to any Survival checks made to track the behemoth.

C. BATTLEFIELD.

> As you traverse this bolder-strewn valley, you near the site where Bax and his men fought the giant beast. Soon you can make out the bodies of slaughtered knights and the shattered remains of stone statues. Arrows and scorchmarks litter the ground.

A *pass without trace* spell has removed the kadtanach's footprints. If the PCs have been tracking the kadtanach's trail, add the following:

> It's strange—the giant, crevasse-like tracks of the beast, which were heading northeast, end here, but the beast is nowhere to be found. The rest of the battlefield tracks are complex: dozens of horse tracks exit the battlefield, several tearing southwest—they probably belong to the fleeing Knights of Heironeous. You also find a second group of tracks comprisedof hooves and wheels. Although these tracks ran parallel with the giant beast prior to the knights' attack, they now break off alone and turn southeast.

D. DEMOLISHED STAND OF TREES

The kadtanach crashes right over this small wooded grove at the same time the PCs begin the adventure at area A. From here the beast covers 24 miles a day; as indicated on the outdoor map, its path is far from straight.

E. HOWLING SPIRIT PASS

The kadtanach works its way through this low point of the mountain range early on the morning of the second day. The pass is actually a granite canyon carved by a long extinct river. See the section "Leap from Above" below if the PCs attempt to board the kadtanach from the cliffs.

F. THE LAKE

This otherwise peaceful lake is another potential interception point for the PCs (see "Swim on Board" below). On the afternoon of the second day, the kadtanach stops to bathe in this cool mountain lake.

G. GHELDAYLIN

Gheldaylin is small town bustling with traders and villagers. The villagers are unaware that by sundown of the second day they will be overrun by the kadtanach. Prior to the adventure's start, the H'Jyord dispatched Seigonas, his gargoyle minion, to eliminate the Heironean messenger.

♛ **Gheldaylin (Hamlet):** Conventional; AL NG; 200 -gp limit; Assets 4,800 gp; Population 276; (95% Human, 5% elf).

Authority Figures: Corl Skorlocklin (mayor), human male Com3; Captain Ral Trawn, human female War4.

Important Characters: Dwodin, human male Clr2 (Fharlanghn).

Notes: Gheldaylin is protected by a wooden palisade, but part of the town has outgrown its confines.

ATTACKING THE KADTANACH

PCs who attack the kadtanach head-on are in for a world of hurt: See the appendix for a complete description of the creature's statistics. The basilisk in area 14 and the monstrous spider in area 15 are brought to bear, and the PCs are exposed to arrow fire from roughly fifty gnoll defenders that attack from a variety of elevated and covered positions in support of the eleven gnoll troops on the ground. A much wiser course of action involves boarding the kadtanach covertly.

GETTING ABOARD

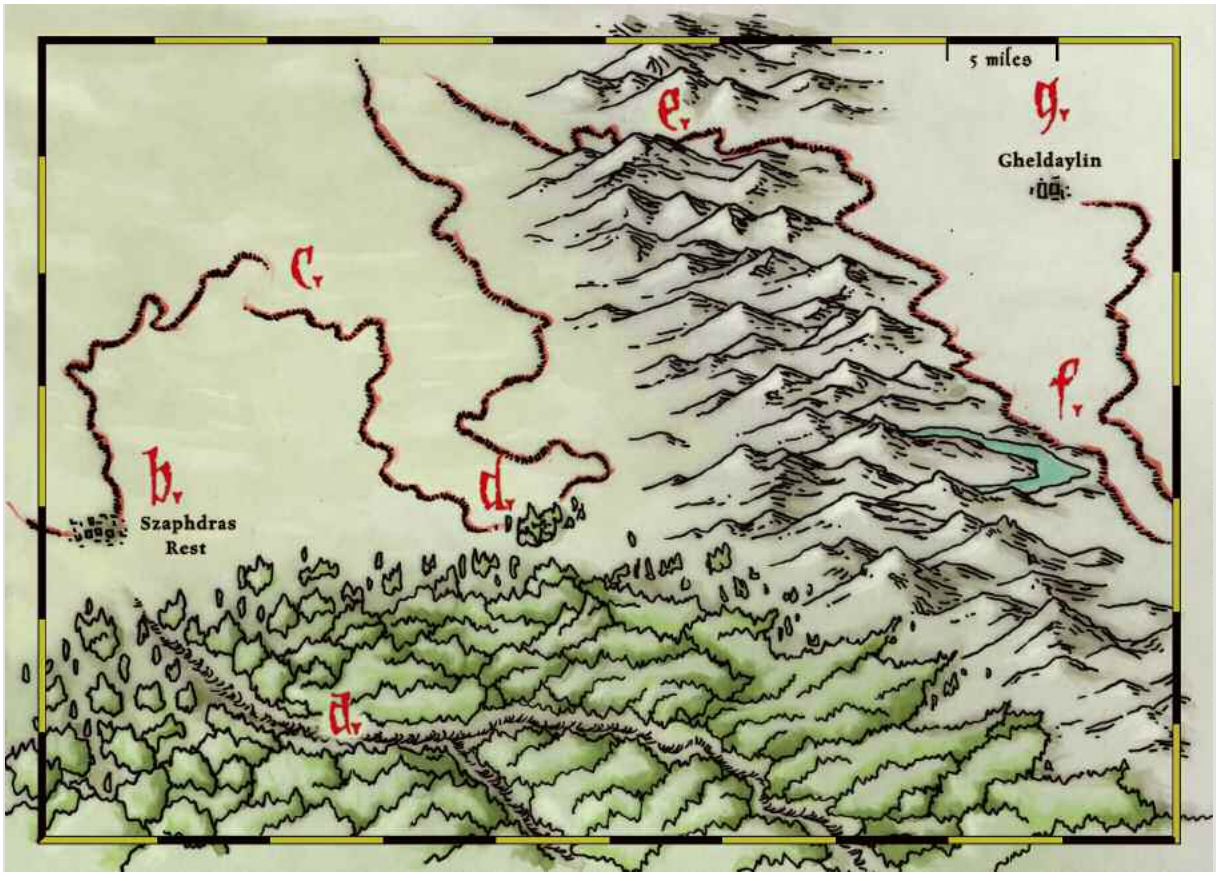
You should stay flexible as the PCs use their ingenuity to figure out how to get on board the kadtanach undetected. Below are some guidelines to adjudicate the success of possible methods:

Climbing Up: By making successful Climb checks (DC 15), a skilled climber can eventually scale the full 100 feet of muscled, leathery limb to reach the lower decks (areas 1b, 2, 4, 5, 12, or the yoke). However, if the kadtanach is in motion the DC increases to 20, and 30 if it runs. Note that a PC with a speed of 30 feet requires at least fourteen successful Climb checks to make it to the top. PCs can make half as many checks to Climb twice as fast, but they make any accelerated Climb checks with a –5 penalty. The kadtanach immediately becomes aware of climbing PCs, but it is so used to little creatures scurrying all over it that it pays the characters no mind.

Grappling Hooks: Throwing a grappling hook successfully the full 100 feet up to the lower decks requires a Use Rope check (DC 30). A PC can make an easier check (DC 20) to secure the rope part way up the leg, but a second check (DC 20) to throw the hook up the rest of the way is made at a –2 penalty due to the precarious position. The penalty increases to –5 if the kadtanach is in motion.

Strike at Night: Unless directed to crouch by its masters, the kadtanach sleeps standing-up. The gnolls have darkvision, but only to a range of 60 feet. After sunset a pair of gnolls in area 16b operate a "floodlight" constructed from *continual flame* stones and angled mirrors resting on a wooden tripod. The beam has an effective range of 200 feet but can only sweep the ground in front of the beast. The winch basket (area 1a) is normally retracted at night unless one of the gnoll surface patrols signals their comrades above by playing a two-note rhythm on a horn. PCs who spy on the kadtanach for any length of time can learn the signal.

Leap From Above: On the morning of the second day after the PCs begin hunting the kadtanach, the beast passes through a low canyon called Howling Spirit Pass (area D). If the PCs track the kadtanach, correctly divine its course, and race ahead,



they can strategically position themselves on a ridge above the kadtanach. They can then drop 20 feet onto the higher, open decks (areas 3 and 12). While traveling through the pass, the H'Jyord divides his gnolls on the ground (see "Gnoll Ground Patrols") into two groups and orders them, as well as Seigonas (area 9a), to sweep the canyon walls ahead of the kadtanach. You should determine precisely where boarding PCs land, and refer to "Protective Wards" below.

Swim Aboard: On the afternoon of the second day, Sylkess orders the kadtanach to bathe its lower body in a lake (area **E**). The bath is carefully orchestrated to avoid flooding any of the howdahs. If the PCs move quickly, they might be able to swim level with the edge of the saddle and stow away aboard a lower deck undetected (areas 1b, 2, or 16d). Over half of the gnoll patrols will be too busy cooling themselves in the water to be guarding effectively. The H'Jyord, however, does not permit Sylkess's pit stop to exceed 30 minutes.

GNOLL GROUND PATROLS (EL 9)

The gnolls on the surface scout ahead for barriers and ambushes. They also double-back from time to time to check for pursuit.

Creatures: These patrols include an armored caravan with a driver and are pulled by a team of six horses that carries six gnoll archers. The wagon is supported by four mounted gnoll cavalry. The cavalry carry signal horns, although their vicious nature usually compels them to attack first and only sound the alarm if in peril. These elite gnolls are specially trained mounted combatants who fight and move with a precision uncommon in their race.

Armored Caravan: 1 in. iron over 1 in. wood; Hardness 8; hp 40; break DC 28; capacity 6 riders and a driver. The archers riding in and firing from the caravan have cover.

Gnoll Driver: hp 11; *Monster Manual* 130.

Gnoll Archers (6): hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 130. Note that these gnolls have AC 19 with cover and carry longbows (1d8/×3) instead of shortbows.

Elite Gnoll Cavalry (4): CR 1; Medium Humanoid (gnoll); HD 2d8+2; hp 17 each; Init +0; Spd 30 ft., 60 ft. mounted; AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; BAB +1; Grap +4; Atk/Full Atk +4 melee (1d8+3/×3 lance), or +4 melee (1d8+3/×3, battleaxe), or +1 ranged (1d6/×3, shortbow); Reach 10 ft. with lance; SQ darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Skills: Listen +3, Ride +5, Spot +4. *Feats:* Mounted Combat.

Possessions: Chain shirt, heavy steel shield, lance, battleaxe, shortbow with 20 arrows.

Light Warhorses (10): hp 22 each; *Monster Manual* 274.

Tactics: The archers remain in the caravan as long as possible, shooting foes with their shortbows while the cavalry moves as a unit to charge any enemies they can see. Mounted gnolls try to charge and deal double damage with their lances.

FIGHTING AT THE FEET

Battling gnolls in the vicinity of the kadtanach's stomping feet is treacherous. Each round, a ground combatant fighting within 30 feet of the behemoth has a 10% chance of finding himself inside the kill-zone of a descending foot. The PCs have two choices each round: either keep one eye on the lumbering legs at all times, or focus completely on the fight at hand.

With the first option, the PCs suffer a –2 competency penalty to attacks to reflect the constant distraction. Similarly, opponents receive +2 circumstance bonus to attack the distracted PCs. However, if the PCs finds themselves beneath a descending foot, they can keep themselves from being squashed with a successful Reflex save (DC 10).

The second option incurs no combat penalty and still provides the PCs a chance to dive out of the way at the last instant, but the Reflex save is much tougher (DC 16). Being mashed under the full weight of the kadtanach is almost certain death, dealing 10d6+30 points of damage. Characters who sustain more than 50 points of damage from this attack and survive must still make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or die outright. Be sure to describe the deep crevasses left by the kadtanach's footprints so the players can appreciate the peril. A PC who forgoes all attacks and flees as a full-round action can always evacuate the kadtanach's foot-step kill zone. Clever PCs might try to push opponents beneath the descending feet of the kadtanach. If they succeed at a bull rush attempt, they can shove an enemy into the path of a foot, forcing the opponent to make a Reflex save (DC 10) or be squashed. Predicting where the feet will fall exactly isn't without risk, though. A PC attempting this tactic increases the chance of being in the path of the foot himself, increasing his chances of being stepped on to 30%. Successful Reflex saves can still prevent a character from being stomped, even in this case. Having seen a number of their former comrades compressed into puddles by a misplaced footstep, the gnolls always select the first option and accept the combat penalty.

PROTECTIVE WARDS

The edges of the open decks and the edges of the rooftops of the howdah have been rigged with arcane wards.

WARNING CRY

Sylkess has cast *magic mouth* spells on the edges of the lower decks to warn of intrusion. The warded areas are marked on the top and side view maps of the kadtanach (areas 1b, 2, 12 and 16d). The *magic mouths* are set with a visual trigger and activate whenever a non-gnoll comes within 1 foot. When a PC activates one of these traps, read or paraphrase the following:

> The floor of the deck suddenly splits open and transforms into a giant, hairy canine maw. The 5-foot-wide gaping mouth flashes its incisors and delivers a sudden savage growl. A moment later the mouth is gone and the deck resolidifies.

Development: Although the mouth itself is harmless, any gnolls in the vicinity (within adjacent areas) immediately investigate the noise. Invisible PCs, or PCs disguised as gnolls, will not trigger the mouths.

BLACK TENTACLES (EL 5)

Trap: These glyphs have been cast in areas 3, 10, and 12 and are marked in red on the top and side view maps of the kadtanach on page 81. The tentacles are triggered by the presence of any non-gnoll and are not deceived by *invisibility* or disguises. Sylkess, Seigonas, and the H'Jyord speak the command word "jurlinspa" to temporarily disable the magic for 1 minute when entering and exiting the howdahs. In addition to the *Evard's black tentacles*, triggering one of these traps sets off an audible *alarm* that lasts as long as the tentacles do (9 rounds). Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs trigger one of these traps:

> Without warning, a dozen jet-black, bony-ridged tentacles erupt from the deck floor and fortress walls. A high-pitched, scream begins to resonate as the 10-foot-long tentacles whip through the air and lash at you from all sides.

↗ ***Evard's Black Tentacles* and *Alarm* Trap:** CR 5; spell; location trigger; no reset; spell effect (*Evard's black tentacles*, 9th-level wizard, tentacles grapple [+17], then deal 1d6+4 damage, 10-foot area, no save); Search (DC 29); Disable Device (DC 29).

The tentacles attack any targets that enter the area until *dispelled* or the 9 rounds pass, at which point they dissolve into nothingness and the *alarm* stops sounding.

THE SMEAR (EL 2)

The edge of areas 1b and 16d, and the edges of the howdah roofs over areas 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 16, are magically trapped with *grease* spells. Refer to the maps on page 81 for details. Read or paraphrase the following if the PCs trigger one of these traps:

> The surface around you suddenly glazes over with a slimy, lime-colored film. The greasy coating is everywhere and you feel your footing grow suddenly precarious.

Trap: The vertical surface areas on the top and side view maps of the kadtanach are laced with glyphs to repel all non-gnolls and send free-climbing boarders to their doom.

↗ ***Grease* Trap:** CR 2; spell; location trigger; no reset; spell effect (*grease*, 9th-level wizard, 10-foot by 10-foot area, Reflex DC 12 negates, save must be repeated each round character remains in the area); Search (DC 26); Disable Device (DC 26).

Climbing PCs who fail their Reflex saves slip and plummet to the surface below. In areas 8, 9, 10, and 11, this means the character falls to the next level down on the kadtanach. Failing the save elsewhere sends the character all the way to the ground below. Sliding PCs have a chance to grab a hold of a non-*greased* protrusion farther down by making a successful Climb check (DC 20) before they free-fall to the earth, which deals 10d6 points of damage.

THE HOWDAHS

The howdahs are a cluster of walled battle platforms built atop the saddle of the kadtanach. Although constructed from wood, much of the saddle has been protected with *permanent ironwood* spells and will not burn. The towers were sculpted evenly with *wood shape* spells. By design, only a few of the howdahs have doors. The gnolls painstakingly lower one another from the crow's nest or firing ports of the archer decks, or use the pulley network described in areas 6b, 7b, and 8b to cross between howdahs.

The thundering footsteps of the kadtanach and the constant creaking of the saddle cover up the noise of combat to a range of 30 feet. The effect cuts both ways: while it assists the PCs by preventing all of the gnolls on aboard the kadtanach from immediately responding at the first sound of intrusion, it also prevents distracted PCs from hearing a gnoll charge until it is almost on top of them. Be mindful of penalties to Spot and Listen checks for distance, particularly between parties on the saddle fortress and on the ground—a distance typically between 100 and 160 feet.

1. WINCH AND CAGE AREA

The gnolls stationed in this area ferry troops to the ground and back. At any given time, three gnolls—one whipmaster and two normal gnolls—wait here for an order to send troops up or down in the transport cage (area 1a) via the winch (area 1b).

1A. TRANSPORT CAGE

If the PCs approach while the kadtanach is stationary, there is an 80% chance the gnolls are operating the winch in area 1b. If the cage is in motion, read or paraphrase the following:

> A giant winch has been constructed above the beast's hindquarters. The winch's thick iron chain supports a large wooden cage: a 5-foot-diameter cylinder. The winch is slowly raising the cage from the ground up into the saddle proper. The winch appears to be used to transport supplies to the gnolls stationed on top.

No more than two Medium creatures can cram into the cage at once. The horse team in area 1b can raise the cage and a maximum of 2,500 pounds at a rate of 10 feet per round (a 10-round trip). The cage is not raised unless the whipmaster in area 1b receives a pre-arranged, two-note horn signal from the ground patrol. This is a frequent occurrence throughout the day.

1B. WINCH BAY (EL 3)

> At the top of the winch bay, four harnessed horses drive a massive yoke in a counter-clockwise circle around the deck, providing the power to operate the great crank that raises the cage.
>
> A cloaked gnoll, with a barbed whip at his belt, folds his arms as he supervises the operation of the winch. Two more burly gnolls assist with unloading.

This mechanical device is used to operate the transport cage in area 1a. It can be temporarily disabled (DC 20) or ruined (DC 30) with a successful Disable Device check.

A ladder in the center of this deck leads up to the ballista platform (area 3), and two passages beneath the quarter's howdah (area 6) and the officer's howdah (area 7) lead to either side of the base platform (area 2).

Creatures: PCs exiting the cage or climbing onto the platform come face-to-face with the gnolls stationed here. Whether raiding or not, these gnolls are always here.

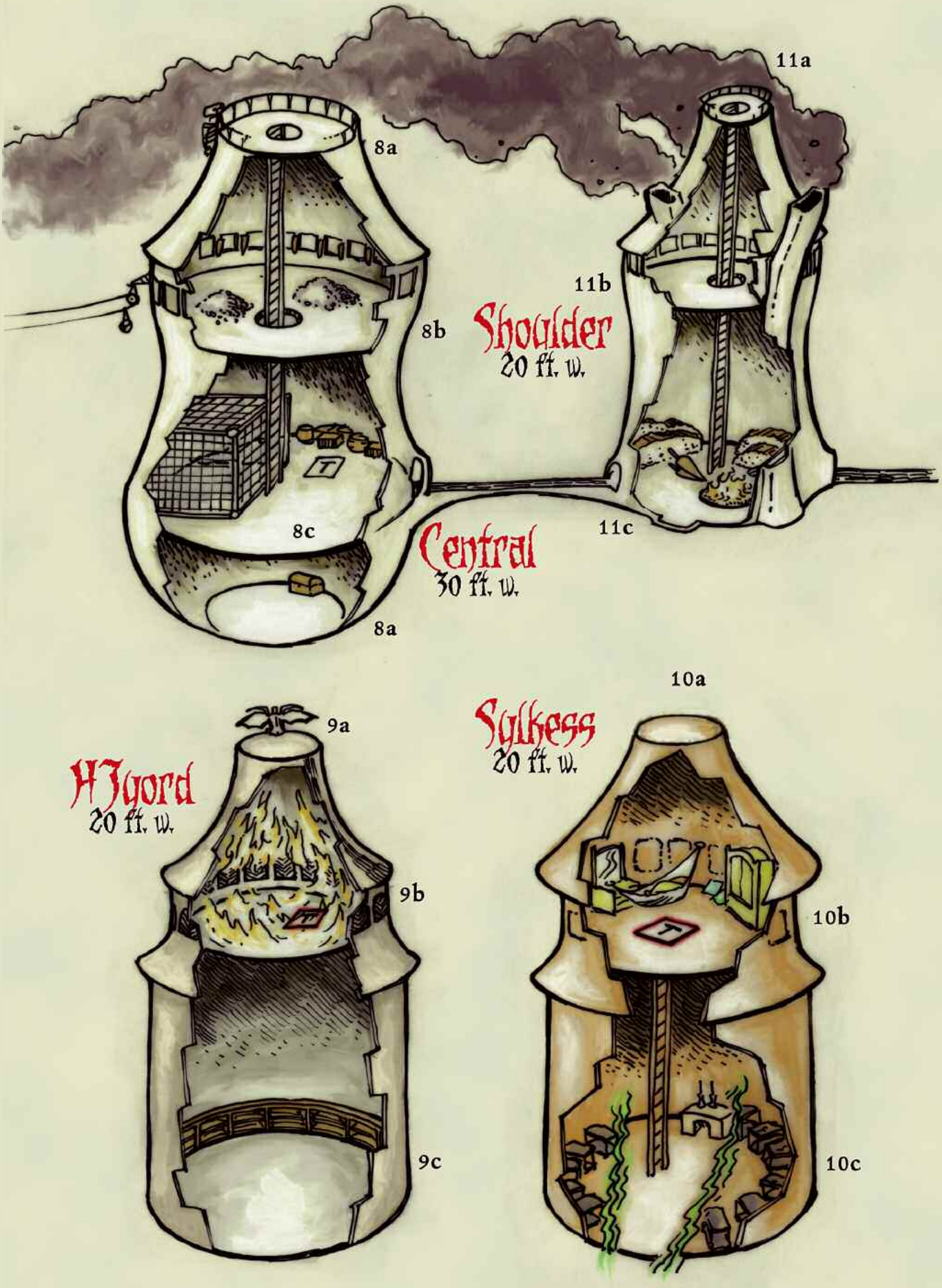
- **Gnoll Whipmaster:** hp 15; *Monster Manual* 130, except this gnoll carries a whip in addition to his other weapons.
- **Gnoll Winch Guards (2):** hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 130.
- **Heavy Horses (4):** hp 19 each; *Monster Manual* 273.

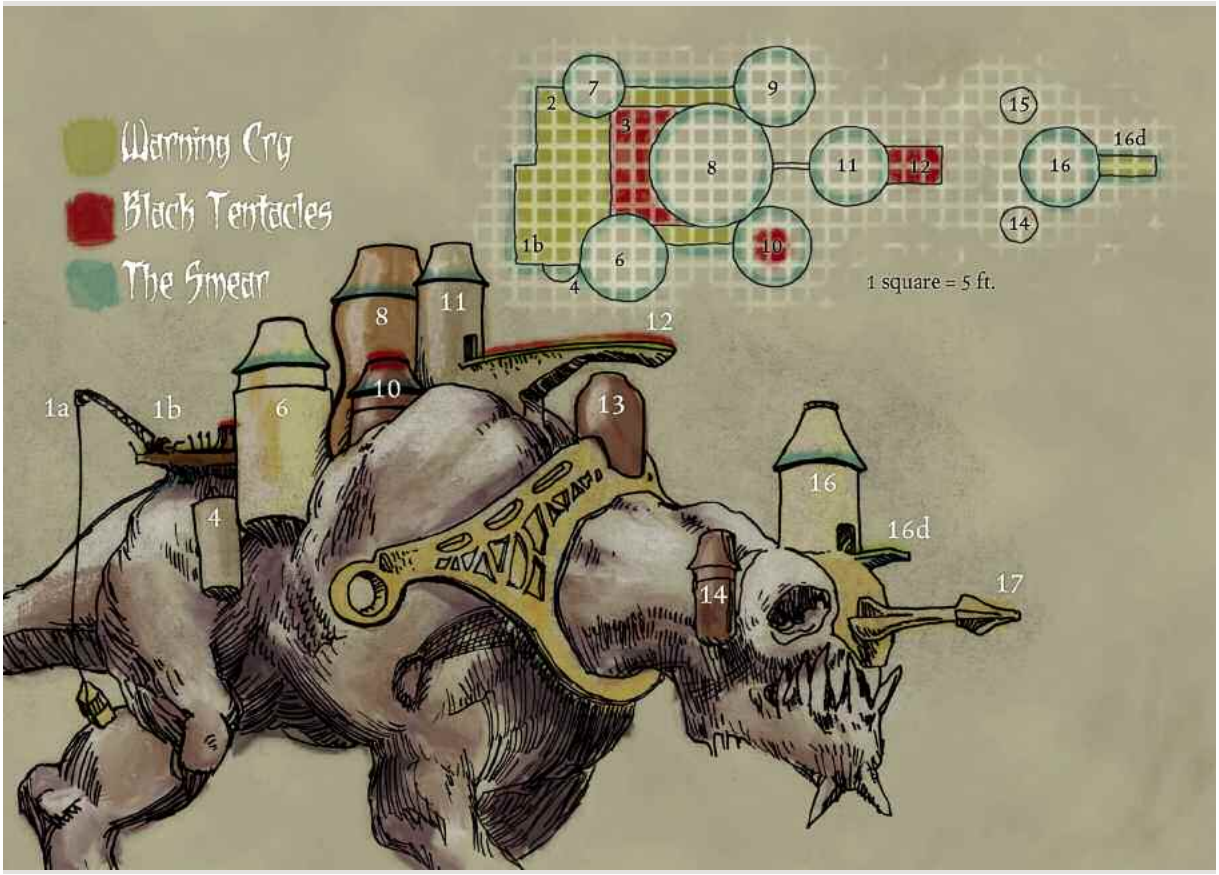
Tactics: The whipmaster doesn't have proficiency with his whip, so in a fight, he drops it in favor of his battleaxe or shortbow. These gnolls are bored with winch duty and don't think to withdraw and warn the crewmembers in areas 2 or 3 until two of them fall.

FIGHTING ABOARD THE KADTANACH

Davnak's helm does not control the kadtanach completely, and the beast has the occasional unscheduled act of free will. If you want to spruce up the battles on board the kadtanach, roll 1d6 on the Random Motion chart below. The chart can either be used at a designated round predetermined in advance of each battle, or on a whim if you decide it is dramatically appropriate. Either way, it should not be used more than once per combat. The gnolls get a +4 competence bonus to any checks required by the kadtanach's movements; they're used to its eccentricities.

Motion	Effect
1	Kadtanach's foot rolls, requiring every combatant to make a Balance check (DC 10) or fall prone.
2	Kadtanach stumbles, requiring every combatant to make a Balance check (DC 10) or fall prone and slide 10 feet in a random direction. Creatures could potentially fall off the side of the fortress.
3	Kadtanach has an itch and shudders for 2 rounds. All attacks made during this time are made with a –2 penalty.
4	Kadtanach yawns. Any creatures in the head region must make a Balance check (DC 10) or fall prone and slide 10 feet toward the rear of the fortress.
5	Kadtanach stretches its back legs. Any creatures in the hindquarters region must make a Balance check (DC 10) or fall prone and slide 10 feet toward the rear of the fortress.
6	Kadtanach lunges at passing wildlife, hoping for a quick snack. All creatures on board must make a Reflex save (DC 15) or fall prone and take 1d6 points of damage as the entire fortress lurches out from beneath the passengers' feet.


11a
8a
11b
Shoulder
20 ft. w.
8b
8c
Central
30 ft. w.
11c
8a
10a
Sylkess
20 ft. w.
9a
Hjord
20 ft. w.
9b
10b
9c
10c



Development: Sounds of battle here could alert the gnolls in areas 2, 3, 4, or 6.

2. BASE PLATFORM (EL VARIES)

The saddle's base platform is riddled with upward facing shortspears to discourage aerial intruders from using this open area as a landing pad. Ladders lead from this platform up to area 3.

Trap (EL 2): The outer platform's edges are layered with smear wards.

Grease Trap: See "The Smear" above.

Creatures (EL 3): Four gnolls patrol the full length of the platform in pairs while the kadtanach travels. During raids or alarms, the gnolls take up firing positions on the archer's deck at area 8b and will not be found here.

Gnoll Archers (4): hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 130, except Atk +1 ranged (1d8/×3, longbow).

3. REAR BALLISTA DECK (EL VARIES)

A loaded ballista on wheels, aimed to snipe at ground targets below, rests in each of the four corners of this open deck. At the bow of the deck, a thick door with an iron, gripping bar leads to the central tower of the saddle complex, a massive birchwood howdah.

Creatures (EL 4): A gnoll mans each ballista. The gnolls, bored and restless, pace anxiously around a two-tiered, wooden weapons rack in the middle of the deck, which secures dozens of serrated ballista javelins.The fourth unmanned ballista is an animated construct that can be fired by a ballista crew but can't fire bolts itself. Unattended, it relies on its slam attack. The gnolls were told the fourth ballista was a gift from their demon lord Yeenoghu, but it is actually a creation from Sylkess's dacha. The ballista springs to life and attacks any non-gnoll on the platform.

Animated Ballista, Large Animated Object: hp 52; *Monster Manual* 14.

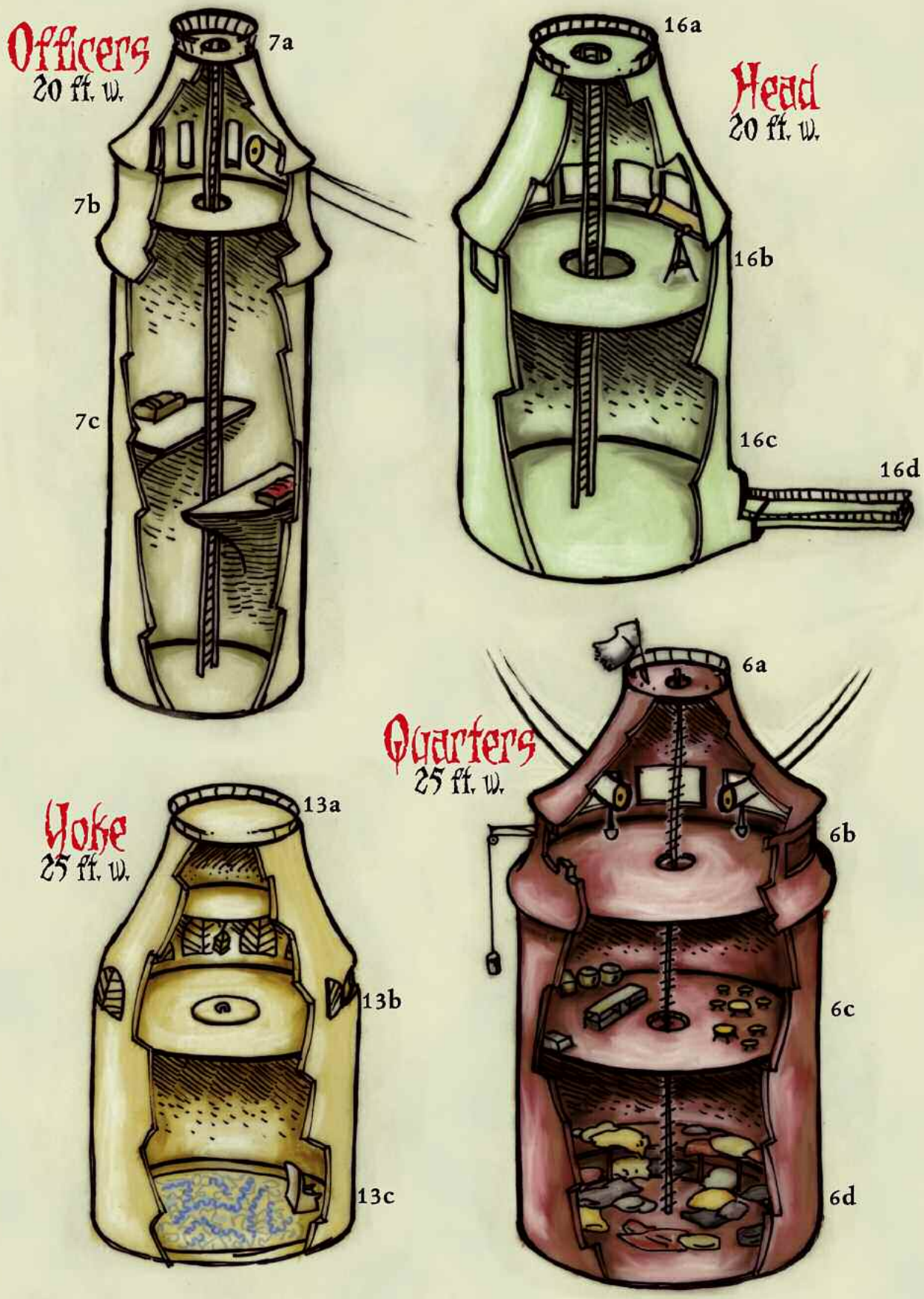
Gnoll Ballista Crews (3): hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 130. Each gnoll is stationed at a ballista. Ballista attacks are made by the gnolls at a –4 penalty, for a net attack of –3. See the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 100, for more details on ballistae.

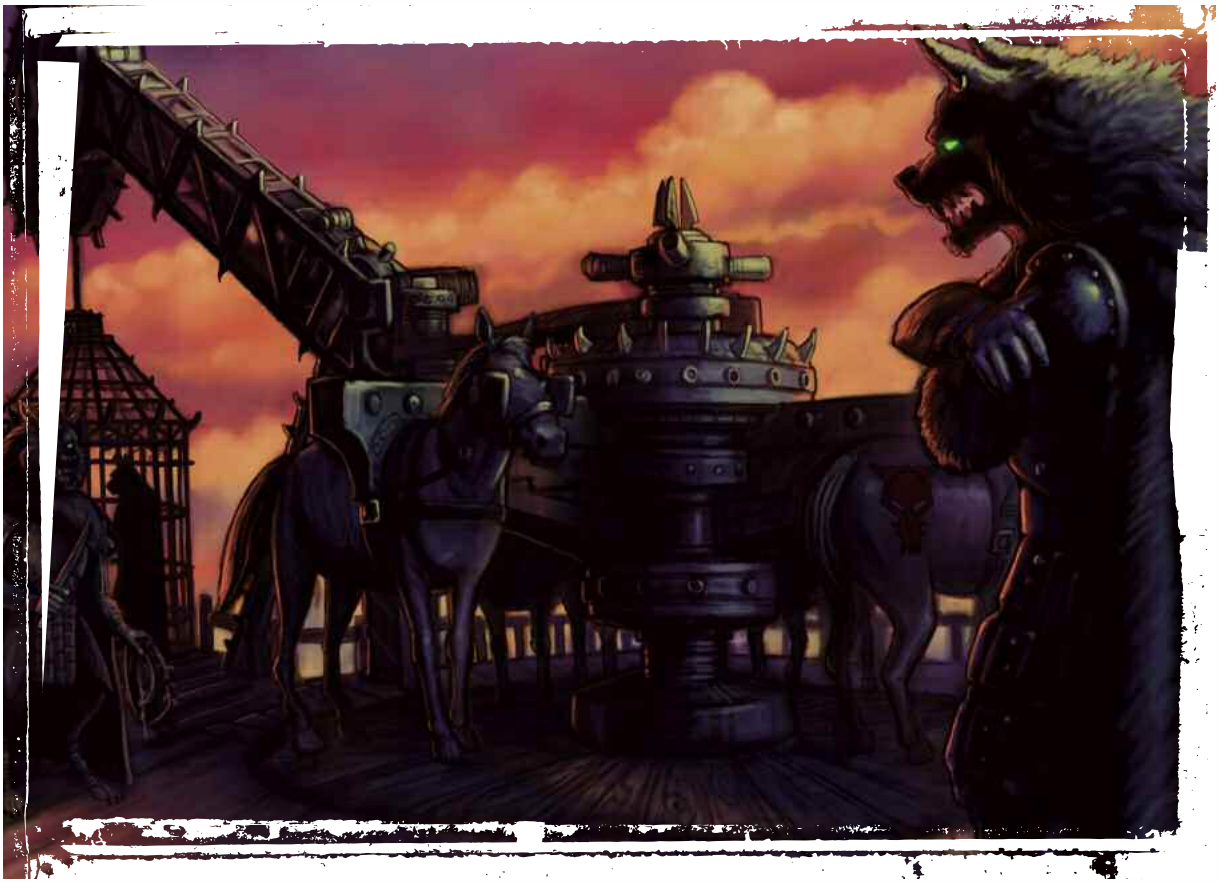
Ordinary Ballista: 3d8/19–20; range increment 120 feet; load time 2 rounds. The ammunition rack houses 48 ballista javelins.

Trap (EL 5): The center 10-foot by 10-foot portion of this deck is blanketed by a black tentacles trap. If triggered, the tentacles lash out indiscriminately, attacking the gnolls, the animated ballista, and the PCs alike.

***Evard's Black Tentacles* and *Alarm* Trap:** CR 5; see "Black Tentacles" above.

Tactics: The gnolls turn their ballistae on the PCs as soon as they reach this deck. They then draw shortbows if the PCs haven't


Officers
20 ft. w.
7a
7b
7c
Head
20 ft. w.
16a
16b
16c
16d
Quarters
25 ft. w.
6a
6b
6c
6d
Yoke
25 ft. w.
13a
13b
13c



closed to melee, or draw battleaxes if they have. The gnolls fight to the death, although if two of them drop, the third howls a warning that could be heard by the gnolls in areas 1, 2, and 4 (Listen DC 20). The gnolls know to avoid the trapped portion of the deck.

4. REAR SADDLE BASKET (EL 1)

A giant, 15-foot-deep wooden basket is suspended from the saddle by thick chains, just in front of the beast's right hindquarter.

This basket acts as the gnolls' fresh water tank; a layer of wax lines the inside to prevent the water from escaping. It is currently full. A single trapdoor in the lid provides access to the water below.

Creature: A lone gnoll perches atop the wooden lid of the dangling saddle basket, hanging onto a small tripod for balance as he keeps watch over the hindquarters of the kadtanach. In front of him, mounted on a stable tripod, is the **Treasure**: a *decanter of endless water*.

Gnoll: hp 11; *Monster Manual* 130.

Development: Normally, the decanter is used to refill the saddle basket, but the gnolls also use the "geyser" feature to harass military targets below. The tripod reduces the recoil of the geyser, eliminating the chance of the gnoll being knocked down. A dipping bucket with an attached rope leads up to area 6b. If an alarm is sounded, the rope and bucket are drawn up.

Sounds of combat here could alert the gnolls in areas 1, 2, or 6 (Listen DC 20).

Treasure: The decanter can be removed from the tripod once the gnoll is defeated. Doing so requires a successful Disable Device check (DC 20). A PC can also break the tripod with a successful Strength check (DC 20) or break it free from the basket (DC 18).

5. GNU-DALCOM'S POD (EL 7)

This sphere-shaped pod is an open-topped arboretum filled from top to bottom with plants and exotic liquid-filled gourds. A shallow pool, 1 foot deep at its center, covers the bottom of the wooden sphere.

The denizen of this pod has customized it with dozens of tiny crannies using *wood shape* to accommodate his favorite plants. This provides a continuing supply of herbs for his spells and potions.

Creature: The H'Jyord has secured the cooperation of a gnoll druid named Gnu-Dalcom. Normally a solitary creature, Gnu-Dalcom has temporarily rejoined his kin to destroy the blight of encroaching human settlements.

Gnu-Dalcom, Male Gnoll Drd5: CR 6; HD 7d8+14; hp 46; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16; BAB +4; Grap +6; Atk/Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+2, masterwork sickle); SA spells, *wild shape* 1/day; SQ nature sense, resist nature's lure, trackless step, wild empathy, woodland stride; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +2, Will +7; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb +3, Knowledge (nature) +4, Listen +6, Spot +7, Survival +7. *Feats:* Brew Potion, Natural Spell.

Druid Spells Prepared (5/4/3/2; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*create water* ×2, *detect magic*, *flare*, *virtue*; 1st—*faerie fire*, *pass without trace* ×3; 2nd—*heat metal*, *spider climb*, *wood shape*; 3rd—*call lightning*, *speak with plants*.

Possessions: +1 leather armor, heavy wooden shield, masterwork sickle, *pearl of power* (1st level), *potion of barkskin*.

Gnu-Dalcom does not live alone. In lieu of bonding an animal companion, he has cultivated an assassin vine. Using *speak with plants*, Dalcom has reached an understanding with the vine: Dalcom supplies the plant with food, and the plant protects the twisted hand that feeds it.

Assassin Vine: hp 30; *Monster Manual* 20.

Tactics: Gnu-Dalcom can't conceive of anyone having the audacity to attack the kadtanach so the assassin vine detects the PCs long before Gnu-Dalcom does (he's effectively suffering a –4 penalty to Listen checks to overhear intruders). The vine attacks first by animating the other plants in the pod and then strangling the PCs one at a time. For his part, Gnu-Dalcom is caught unprepared, having mostly selected spells for maintaining the kadtanach. He drinks his *potion of barkskin* and then *wild shapes* into a crocodile to defend himself. The druid can cast spells in this form via his Natural Spell feat. If his assassin vine dies and he loses half his hit points, Gnu-Dalcom tries to flee the pod.

Development: If the druid escapes, he heads to the winch (area **1a**), hoping to be let to the ground so he can make his escape. Gnu-Dalcom isn't a warrior, and his loyalty to the H'jyord lasts only as long as his personal safety isn't threatened. If the gnolls in area **1** have already been dealt with, Gnu-Dalcom hides near the water basket and waits for the kadtanach's next stop so he can climb down.

Treasure: Three of the gourds hold potions. They include a *potion of water breathing*, a *potion of cure moderate wounds*, and a *potion of protection from energy* (*fire*).

6. QUARTERS HOWDAH

Although most of the gnolls sleep under the stars on the open decks, a lucky few rest here off-shift.

6A. CROW'S NEST (EL 1)

Although one of the lower crow's nests in the fortress, the view from here is still incredible: You must be almost 140 feet above the ground.

Inside the nest, a halberd, securely embedded in the wooden floor, flies a flag featuring a crudely drawn skull from its shaft. Next to the blade, a crude ladder—a single pole lashed with bone rungs—leads down into the deck below.

The ladder leads to area **6b**.

Creature: Outfitted with a composite longbow, a gnoll watchman in the crow's nest stands ready to snipe at targets below.

Gnoll Sentry: hp 11; *Monster Manual* 130, except Atk +1 ranged (1d8/×3, composite longbow).

Tactics: This gnoll is less likely to notice an ascent from below; he's more concerned with events on the ground below than what's going on in the fortress. If he does notice the sounds of battle (Listen DC 15), he has no way to alert the rest of the fortress except by passing messages down through the howdah. He waits for the first PC to appear on the ladder, fires his longbow, and then engages in melee as necessary.

6B. ARCHER'S DECK (EL VARIES)

This cylindrical chamber is over 20 feet in diameter. The walls, floor, and ceiling are all made of the same burgundy, smooth-textured wood.

Eight large, square windows encircle the room. Peering out the windows, you can spy into the windows of another nearby howdah.

Two small pulleys with small wooden baskets attached are anchored to the windowsills just inside the room. The first pulley slopes upward, traveling 50 feet and connecting to a window of the largest central tower, closer to the beast's head. The second pulley also slopes upward. The pulley's ropes are over 100 feet long, stretching 50 feet over the rear ballista deck below to the window of a tall skinny tower by the great beast's back left leg.

A wooden pole with bone rungs leads up through a hole in the center of the ceiling to the crow's nest above. The ladder also continues down through an open hole in the floor to the deck below. In the center of the room is a crudely jumbled pile of poorly maintained archery equipment.

Creatures (EL 0 or 5): During a raid or if an alarm has sounded, six gnolls are stationed here. Otherwise, the archers lounge in areas **6c** and **6d** instead.

Gnoll Archers (6): hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 130, except Atk +1 ranged (1d8/×3, longbow).

The windows are missile ports that provide archers with cover (+4 AC) from attacks outside the deck. However, gnolls or PCs attacking from the archer's deck of another howdah enjoy the same protection.

The gnolls use the pulley baskets as a quick method to send supplies and messages to one another without having to climb out of the howdah. The first connects to the central howdah (area **8**) and the second to the officer's howdah (area **7**). The pulley baskets are too small for Medium size or larger creatures to ride in. Larger PCs can travel along the pulley by climbing hand-over-hand (Climb DC 15), but the pulley only supports 300 pounds of weight at one time. Climbing targets are denied their Dexterity bonus to AC, so gnoll snipers who Spot (DC 15) them quickly take advantage of the slow-moving targets.

The other end of the rope, tied to the dipping bucket hanging in the rear saddle-basket (area **4**), is tied to a third windowsill and may be drawn up to provide drinking water or slid down to provide a quick way out of the howdah.

6C. CHOW DECK (EL VARIES)

Filled with stools, low tables, and the stench of rotting meat, this small room is obviously some sort of feeding area. A table near one wall is piled with dirty pans and plates, as well as a large, barely cooked haunch of meat.

The bone-rung ladder continues through a crude hole in the center of the floor and ceiling.

Creatures (EL 2 or 5): Three gnolls wait here for a meal. The gnolls eat in shifts, so three can be found here at any given time.

Gnoll Chef: hp 16; *Monster Manual* 130, except +3 melee (1d6+2/×3, cleaver).

Gnoll Assistant: hp 11; *Monster Manual* 130.

Gnoll Archers (3): hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 130, except Atk +1 ranged (1d8/×3, longbow).

Development: These gnolls move to the archery deck (area 6b) if they hear sounds of combat above; modify this description if the gnolls have already been defeated when the PCs arrive. The chef and his assistant are here regardless of the other gnolls' actions.

6D. SLEEPING DECK (EL VARIES)

The walls in this cylindrical chamber are tightly ringed with bunk beds, and the remaining floor space is blanketed with crowded sleeping mats. This room is made from the same dark-red, smooth-textured wood as the rest of this tower.

Creatures (EL 0 or 3): The PCs find three gnolls here sleeping, goofing off, or just hiding from their superiors. The flat-footed gnolls take 1 round to stand up and pick up a weapon.

Gnoll Archers (3): hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 130, except Atk +1 ranged (1d8/×3, longbow).

Development: If an alarm has been sounded, the PCs encounter these gnolls manning their posts in area 6b above. Modify the description accordingly if this is the case.

7. OFFICER'S HOWDAH

A few gnolls who have found favor with the H'Jyord have lodgings in this tall tower, built over the kadtanach's left hindquarter.

7A. CROW'S NEST (EL 1)

This crow's nest is a tight fit; there's only room for a couple human-sized creatures up here. From this height you can see the entire back half of the fortress. Looking down from the rocking perch, you see the beast's huge foot scatter trees and boulders as though they were pebbles and twigs.

A ladder from this small platform leads down to the archer's deck of this howdah (area 7b).

Creature: A lone sentry guards this excellent vantage point. If the gnoll spots a disturbance on the ballista deck or on the winch bay, he blows his horn and alerts all of his brethren.

Gnoll Sentry: hp 11; *Monster Manual* 130, except Atk +1 ranged (1d8/×3 longbow).

Tactics: Like the sentry in area 6a, this guard is concerned with watching the ground below. He's unlikely to notice the PCs approaching from below (Listen DC 15). If he does hear them, he takes the same approach as the gnoll in area 6a: he prepares to fire his longbow at the first PC who starts to climb up.

7B. ARCHER'S DECK (EL 4)

This tower appears to have been carved from a single piece of oak; unfortunately, this chamber reeks of wet dog fur.

Eight large windows encircle the deck, enabling you to see the other towers sprouting from the saddle on the creature's back. One of the windows anchors one end of a long pulley. The pulley's ropes slope gently downward, traveling almost 100 feet before connecting to one of the windows of a wider but shorter tower by the right rear leg.

A thin ladder leads up to a crow's nest and down to a chamber through holes in the ceiling and floor.

Creatures: This archer's deck is always manned by four gnolls that serve as lackeys to the officers in area 7c between raids. However, if the PCs strike before or after a raid, this area is vacant. The window facing the archer's deck of the quarter's howdah (area 6b) contains a pulley with a basket to receive supplies and messages. Gnolls have cover (+4 AC) from targets outside the howdah.

Gnoll Archers (4): hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 130, except Atk +1 ranged (1d8/×3, longbow).

7C. OFFICER'S QUARTERS (EL 4)

This chamber is furnished with more luxury—if you could call it that—than you'd expect. The pallets and chairs seem a little more sturdy and less flea infested.

Creatures: The lofts in these quarters provide more elbowroom for the favored warriors of the tribe. Two gnoll lieutenants sit here, trading war stories of their respective roles in the battle for Szaphdra's Rest as they clean the stains on their greataxes. In a raid, these two gnolls station themselves in area 8b.

Gnolls Lieutenants, Male Gnoll War1 (2): CR 2; Medium Humanoid (gnoll); HD 3d8+6; hp 20 each; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 16; BAB +2; Grap +5; Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d8/×3, masterwork battleaxe) or +2 ranged (1d6/×3, shortbow); SQ darkvision 60 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 16, Dex, 10, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb +2*, Listen +5, Spot +5. *Feats:* Power Attack, Cleave.

*Includes –4 armor check penalty.

Possessions: Chain shirt, heavy wooden shield, masterwork battleaxe, shortbow with 20 arrows, carved bone signal horn (50 gp), bone and feather talismans, 35 gp.

Tactics: The gnolls here leap to attack intruders, howling to the archers on the upper levels to come to their aid. These other troops arrive in 3 rounds if they have not yet been dealt with.

8. CENTRAL HOWDAH

This 80-foot-high birch-wood howdah is the main hub of activity on the kadtanach. If the PCs linger here long they should encounter a pair of gnolls from various areas every few minutes.

8A. CROW'S NEST

The largest nest in the fortress, the H'Jyord insists it always be manned by at least two gnolls. The railing at the bow is decorated with the skeletal remains of the wings of a hippogriff, brought down by Seigonas (area **9a**) a few weeks ago.

Creatures: The two gnolls here are prepared and act similarly to their counterparts in areas **6a** and **7a**.

Gnoll Archers (2): hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 130, except Atk +1 ranged (1d8/×3, longbow).

8B. ARCHER'S DECK (EL VARIES)

Although you are still quite high in the howdah, this room feels surprisingly stable. It might be because you are so close to the center point of the beast's back.

Twelve wide firing ports ring this large cylindrical deck. Beside each window, a longbow and loaded quiver hang on a peg. Closer to the center of the 20-foot-diameter chamber are two large piles of fist-sized rocks and jagged debris. Between the piles, a ladder leads up to a crow's nest and down to an even larger chamber on a level below.

One end of a pulley, with a wooden basket attached, is anchored at one of the windows toward the rear. The rope attached to the pulley stretches across a short gap and connects to a smaller howdah close to the beast's right rear leg.

During a raid, this platform becomes the kadtanach's main ranged attack station.

Creature (EL 2 or 8): While the kadtanach is traveling, only four gnolls keep watch in the shade here. During a planned attack or if an alarm sounds, four more gnolls (from area **2**), the two lieutenants (area **7c**), and the elite gnolls (area **13b**) join them at the firing stations. Gnolls have cover (+4 AC) from targets outside the howdah.

Gnoll Archers (4 or 8): hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 130, except Atk +1 ranged (1d8/×3, longbow).

Gnoll Lieutenants (2): see area **7c** for statistics.

Elite Gnolls (4): see area **13b** for statistics.

Tactics: On command, four of the gnolls use the collected debris to rain a shower of rocks on the opposition below. Each pile of debris covers one 5-foot square. A creature in a targeted square must make a Reflex save (DC 15) for half damage. The remaining gnolls typically fire arrows at ground targets, but are happy to engage in melee with any invaders who enter this chamber.

Development: The gnolls here howl while they fight, probably alerting creatures in adjacent areas (Listen DC 5).

8C. SLAVE PEN (EL 5)

The ladder descending from the archer's deck above anchors securely into the floor. The walls slope in toward the ceiling, giving the room pear shape. A square, empty, rusted-iron cage with a large dangling padlock fills the back half of the room.

Directly across from the cage, an arch connects to a cramped corridor. The smell of smoke wafts through from that direction. Also across from the cage, next to the arch, sits a pile of a dozen casks and vats, each about 2 feet high.

The gnolls prefer to have a supply of slave labor on-hand, but since they also prefer snacks the slave pen is presently empty. At your option, you can choose to add a few prisoners for the PCs to rescue as seeds for future adventures.

If Sylkess (area **10c**) becomes convinced the H'Jyord's minions can't withstand the PCs' assault, she casts *misdirection* on herself to conceal her true alignment and then orders a pair of gnolls from area **8b** to take her here, lock her in the slave pen, and guard her. Then Sylkess waits to be rescued. She learns all she can about the PCs and then decides whether to strike when their backs are turned or attempt an escape.

The arch leads to the shoulder-blade howdah at area **11c**. The two howdahs are connected by a thin, 8-inch-wide wooden plank without a railing. A Balance check (DC 10) is required to traverse the plank. Any PC knocked off the plank, or who fails his Balance check by 5 or more, falls 20 feet onto the middle of the bare back of the kadtanach, taking 2d6 points of damage in the process. A successful Climb check (DC 15) enables the PC to grab a hold of the creature's leathery hide before rolling off the side of the beast and plunging 100 feet to the ground. A PC who fails this second check takes 10d6 additional points of damage.

On the deck floor outside the bars of the slave pen is a hidden trapdoor that leads to area **8d**.

Secret Trapdoor: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; break DC 18; Search DC 20.

8D. GNOLL TREASURE HOLD

PCs must drop down 10 feet from the trapdoor to access this chamber, as there is no ladder. Inside lies the gnolls' share of the spoils from the campaign.

Treasure: Many personal effects are stored here, such as jeweled mirrors, ivory combs, silverware, and silver candle holders (total value 4,500 gp). Most are the heirlooms of frontier villagers left dead or homeless by the kadtanach attacks. In addition, the PCs find 8,657 cp, 4,128 sp, and 394 gp scattered around the room and a huge wooden "Welcome to Szaphdra's Rest" sign from the gnolls' most recent sack.

9. H'JYORD'S PRIVATE HOWDAH

As he does not require rest, the H'Jyord is seldom here. Instead, he is normally found on the command deck (area **13c**). This ash wood howdah has no ladders; the H'Jyord simply *teleports* to each level as required.

9A. SEIGONAS'S PERCH (EL 5)

You've reached the highest point of the entire fortress: the crow's nest of the highest howdah. From here, over the ash railing, you can see virtually everything—from the steeply-sloped, dark wooden shingles of the tower's roof, to the rocky, uneven ground of the earth below almost 175 feet below. You can also see the dozens of missile ports in the other towers, the open catapult deck jutting from between the great beast's mountain-like shoulderblades, and the ballista deck at the stern.

Unlike the other crow's nests, this platform has no railing.

Creature: The top of H'Jyord's howdah is guarded by a gargoyle named Seigonas. If the PC's have not yet dealt with the creature (see **Tactics** below), add the following:

The port-side of the nest is dominated by a 6-foot-tall basalt stone statue perched on the edge of the howdah. The demonic carving has outstretched bat wings; razor-edged, scythe-like horns jutting from its shoulder blades; and wicked jaws. A tiny sphere, pulsing with light, orbits slowly around the statue's head.

Seigonas, Gargoyle: hp 41; *Monster Manual* 113.

Possessions: Pale lavender ellipsoid ioun stone (5 spell levels remaining).

Tactics: If an alarm is raised, or if Seigonas spots the PCs' activities from his perch, the gargoyle can fly to any crow's nest, open deck, or through any missile port to ambush the PCs. Seigonas does not, however, coordinate his actions with the gnolls. He cares little for the lesser mongrels and collaborates only with the H'Jyord, with whom he can communicate.

This deck has no opening leading to the area below.

9B. INITIATION CHAMBER

The windows to the H'Jyord's howdah have been shuttered and locked.

Reinforced Shutters: 1 1/2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 15; break DC 18; Open Lock DC 15.

If the PCs gain entry, read the following:

The inside of this howdah is engulfed in flame! Judging by the lack of smoke, someone must have set the room ablaze only moments ago.

The fire is a minor illusion generated by dozens of harmless *continual flame* spells. Using his special ability, the H'Jyord has centered the effect on several of the windowsills and dozens of points on the floor. After its initial shock value, though, the effect is not very convincing; the PCs quickly discover the flames do not generate heat or smoke and can plainly see that the wood is not being consumed.

Other than the *continual flames*, this room is empty. The H'Jyord uses this room as a ceremonial chamber where he initiates new gnolls into his command by walking them through the false fire. At the rear of the room, the PCs can find a locked trapdoor that leads to area **9c**. The opening offers no means of descent, so PCs will have to find a way to drop the 30 feet themselves.

Locked Trapdoor: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; break DC 30, Open Lock DC 20.

9C. THE H'JYORD'S TREASURE ROOM

Plunder proudly lines the walls on rows of ash-wood shelving. It's a good bet that this room—and everything in it—belongs to someone important.

The H'Jyord has stashed his share of the loot taken thus far in this chamber.

Treasure: The H'Jyord's war chest consists of the following items:

- 6,489 sp, 921 gp, 87 pp, and seven gemstones worth (3 × 200 gp and 4 × 150 gp)
- Three ice jade scroll casings (60 gp each). One case holds a letter of invitation to attend classes at a prominent college of arcanists. The letter could be worth 80 gp to the right person.
- A scholar's orrery of the planes cast in bronze (175 gp—a successful Knowledge—the planes check DC 20 reveals its purpose)
- A set of masterwork adamantine wrist shackles (400 gp; Hardness 20; hp 20; break DC 28; Open Lock DC 35)
- A 5-foot-high water clock sculpted in the shape of a sea lion (1,175 gp)

10. SYLKESS'S HOWDAH

The wizard Sylkess has reserved this howdah as her private refuge from the gnolls. The exterior has been *wood shaped* from elegant mahogany and has been kept cleaner than the other howdahs.

10A. CROW'S NEST (EL 4)

Like the H'Jyord's howdah, no ladder or trapdoor leads down to the deck below. Although it was part of the original design, Sylkess had Gnu-Dalcom cast *wood shape* to seal off the entrance.

Trap: Because the nest does not provide a point of access, it is left unmanned. Instead the nest is blanketed with an *Evard's black tentacles* spell.

***Evard's Black Tentacles* and *Alarm* Trap:** see "Black Tentacles" for details.

10B. SYLKESS'S BED CHAMBER

Sylkess has cast multiple *illusory wall* spells to hide the windows. Probing PCs, however, find portholes ringing the deck, consistent with the upper levels of the other howdahs.

This windowless room has been converted into a breezy bedchamber. Inside the mahogany chamber you find a silk hammock, a collection of embroidered pillows, and a closet filled with the personal effects of a woman with expensive tastes.

Sylkess has cast multiple *illusory wall* spells to hide the windows. Probing PCs, however, find portholes ringing the deck, consistent with the upper levels of the other howdahs.

Sylkess's personal items have a total value 750 gp but weigh 100 pounds. The PCs do not immediately see any way down, as the floor is also covered with an *illusory wall* spell. However, a ladder leads down from a an unlocked trapdoor in the floor.

Trapdoor: 1 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 10; break DC 18.

10C. SYLKESS'S STUDY (EL VARIES)

> The ladder leads you to the bottom of the howdah. The walls are tightly ringed with bunk beds, and the remaining floor space is blanketed with crowded sleeping mats. Although you don't see any gnolls here now, their mangy scent lingers in the room.

Sylkess has cast *mirage arcana* to further conceal her study from intruders. The PCs see filthy gnoll sleeping quarters, patterned after area **6d**. If the mirage is *dispelled* or disbelieved, read or paraphrase the following:

> The bunk beds and sleeping mats vanish before your eyes. Instead you now find yourself inside a great study. The smell of gnoll is gone, replaced by the scent of beeswax candles. A smooth mahogany desk fills the back of the room, matching the howdah walls and floor. Next to the desk, a large, amethyst-encrusted pedestal holds a leather-bound tomb. The pedestal has been sculpted into the shape of a purple wormwith its mouth agape, its hinged jaws securing the book in place.

The pedestal has a potential value of 2,000 gp to someone with a strange taste in art, but it weighs 225 pounds. It holds Sylkess's traveling spellbook.

Trap (EL 5): Sylkess has placed two wards on the spellbook. The first is a *magic mouth*. It triggers whenever a non-evil being comes within 5 feet of the book. The mouth speaks in Common using Sylkess's own voice and says: "Ah, ah, ah! If you touch my book, it is the innocent who will suffer. . . ." The vain use of her own voice is an error that might provide the PCs with a clue if Sylkess later tries to pose as a prisoner in the gnoll's slave pen (see area **8c**).

Next, if anyone other than Sylkess tries to dislodge the book, a *bestow curse* spell is triggered that makes it appear as though tiny people are trapped inside the liquid of the violator's eyes. The illusory victims are desperately pounding at the cornea, their silent screams begging for release. This curse results in a –6 decrease to the character's Charisma score.

***Bestow Curse* Trap:** CR 5; spell; location trigger; no reset; spell effect (*bestow curse*, 9th-level wizard, target creature touching book, Will DC 16 negates); Search (DC 29); Disable Device (DC 29). The curse is permanent and cannot be *dispelled*, but may be removed by *remove curse* or other potent healing magic.

The PCs find that they can freely page through the spellbook without any danger as long as the book is not removed.

Creature (EL 9): If the PC's have been quiet thus far, they catch Sylkess unprepared, lost in study at her desk.

Kaya Sylkess, Female Human Wiz9: CR 9; Medium Humanoid (human); HD 9d4; hp 21; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 11, flat-footed 11; BAB +4; Grap +5; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d6, quarterstaff); SA spells; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 19, Wis 10, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +7, Concentration +12, Craft (alchemy) +6, Craft (trapmaking) +11, Decipher Script +10, Diplomacy +8, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge (the planes) +10, Spellcraft +18, Spot +3. *Feats:* Brew Potion, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Great Fortitude, Scribe Scroll, Spell Penetration, Still Spell.

Spells Prepared (4/5/5/4/3/1; base save DC = 14 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, mage hand, ray of frost, read magic;* 1st—*charm*

DAVNAK'S HELM

The kadtanach is controlled by a magical, eyeless bone helm kept in the command center (area **13c**). Anyone wearing the helm sees exclusively through the eyes of the kadtanach and can control its actions. The wearer can issue one silent telepathic command to the kadtanach each round as a full-round action. *Davnak's helm* was built exclusively to control the kadtanach and has no effect on any other creature.

The helm is not keyed to any individual and the H'Jyord has entrusted a number of gnolls with piloting. However, a neophyte who first places the helm on must make a Will save (DC 20) or be overcome with vertigo for 1d6 rounds.

If the helm is not worn, or the pilot stops issuing commands, the tiny brain of the kadtanach gradually resumes control. At first it exhibits infrequent signs of protest: occasional grumbles or bucking motions, but after 30 minutes of freedom the kadtanach's free will returns completely. It begins to shakes off its saddle, destroying the howdahs, and lumbers off into the wild. The process takes 1d8 hours, during which time anyone remaining on board suffers a –10 circumstance penalty to any actions as long as the creature remains in contact with the kadtanach or the fortress. Creatures still in the fortress during this time must also make a Reflex save (DC 15) once per minute or take 2d6 points of damage from collapsing walls, ceilings, or falling debris. Characters who fail are also pinned beneath rubble, requiring a successful Strength check (DC 15) to get free. Spells require a Concentration check (DC 15 + spell level) to be cast successfully. Anyone still inside the howdah when the saddle is finally torn off must make a Reflex save or take 5d6 points of damage from falling debris and the collapse of the howdah, then take 10d6 points of falling damage as the saddle plummets to the ground 100 feet below.

If the PCs manage to capture *Davnak's helm,* they might decide to try to keep the kadtanach. This surely attracts the attention of the Daegoth-Szonri, who soon dispatch several high-level loremasters to reclaim their stolen project. The PCs should also learn, through wearing the helm, that the kadtanach is miserable in its current state, and keeping it captive in this fashion is very cruel. See the appendix for details on the kadtanach's actions should it remain uncontrolled for more than 30 minutes.

Caster Level: 14th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *dominate monster; Market Price:* 125,750 gp; Weight; 3 lb.

person ×2, *color spray, mage armor, magic missile*; 2nd—*invisibility, mirror image, misdirection, nondetection, touch of idiocy*; 3rd—*dispel magic, fly, lightning bolt, suggestion*; 4th—*dimension door, enervation* ×2; 5th—*baneful polymorph*.

Possessions: Quarterstaff, *amulet of natural armor +1, pearl of power* (1st level), *potion of flying, potion of protection from arrows, potion of invisibility, potion of levitate,* scroll of *prying eyes* and *minor globe of invulnerability*, scroll of *teleport, bag of holding* (*type 1*) 112 pp, 510 gp and 7 tiger eyes (125 gp each).

In addition to the spells above, Sylkess's traveling spellbook contains: 0—all remaining cantrips; 1st—*alarm, grease, endure elements, protection from good, reduce person, shocking grasp*; 2nd—*arcane lock, invisibility, levitate, magic mouth, protection from arrows, rope trick, summon swarm*; 3rd—*fireball, flame arrow, stinking cloud, summon monster III*; 4th—*charm monster, dimensional anchor, Evard's black tentacles, illusory wall, minor creation, phantasmal killer, polymorph*; 5th—*cloudkill, dismissal, mirage arcana, passwall, teleport, wall of force.*

Tactics: Sylkess is aware of her limited combat skills, and if surprised she either tries to talk her way out of danger or flee. If an alarm has been raised or Sylkess detects the PCs' approach, she casts *mage armor,* followed by *invisibility*. She then crouches behind her desk and spies on the PCs to assess their strengths while they explore her study. If she chooses to attack, she drinks her *potions of flying* and *protection from arrows*. Then she times her strike just as the last PC tries to climb back up the ladder. Although she has another spellbook in her dacha back home, Sylkess would rather not let the PCs leave with her traveling spellbook.

Development: If hard pressed in a battle, she *dimension doors* to the command deck (area **13c**).

If the PCs are able to engage her in a lengthy dialogue, a charismatic PC might get Sylkess to reveal that she is unhappy with the way the H'Jyord has usurped her project with a successful Diplomacy check (DC 25). While at first Sylkess was thrilled with the H'Jyord's ability to recruit an endless supply of gnolls, she now realizes his unending campaign against the settlements will inevitably come crumbling down. If the PCs succeed in convincing her that day has finally come, she agrees to leave without warning the H'Jyord. She's true to her word, although she stops briefly to raid the H'Jyord's treasury (area **9c**) before she flees.

Sylkess no longer has a familiar; it was slain by the original H'Jyord.

Treasure: Anyone searching the desk finds a scroll of *arcane lock* and *detect thoughts.*

11. SHOULDER BLADE HOWDAH

This elevated howdah is tucked between the center of the beast's shoulder blades. Like the center howdah, it is composed of birch wood.

11A. CROW'S NEST (EL 1)

This smaller nest enables a lone gnoll to snipe targets at will. It is always manned.

Creature: The gnoll in this nest wears a scarf over his muzzle to protect himself from the thick plumes of smoke rising from the three stone chimneys attached to the howdah's exterior. While the kiln in area **11c** is in operation, all ranged attacks fired into and out of the crow's nest suffer from concealment (20% miss chance).

Gnoll Archer: hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 130, except Atk +1 ranged (1d8/×3, longbow).

11B. ARCHER'S DECK (EL VARIES)

This round chamber is well situated for archers to stand at its windows and fire at targets on the ground below. Three longbows and quivers of arrows hang from pegs near the windows.

Creatures (EL 2 or 5): The gnoll archers here ignite their arrows by bringing up a vat of pitch from the kiln below. Gnolls firing out the windows have cover (+4 AC) from opponents outside. Although only two gnolls stand guard, three more from area **11c** take up position here in 2 rounds if an alarm is sounded. The extra longbows and quivers are for their use.

Gnoll Archers (2): hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 130, except Atk +1 ranged (1d8 plus 1d4 fire/×3, longbow).

11C. KILN

A large burning kiln fills the starboard half of this circular chamber. Two large bellows, suspended from the ceiling by leather straps, are aimed to pump jets of air into the heart of the flames. Three stone chimneys vent the smoke out of the howdah, but the heat in this room is still oppressive. A stack of crudely cut firewood fills what little space is left in the room.

The room has three exits: a crooked ladder leading to a level above, an arch leading to an open deck outside, and a cramped corridor that appears to connect to another tower.

PCs fighting in this room suffer from the effects of extreme heat, as the air temperature in this room is near 100 degrees. The characters must make a successful Fortitude save on entering the room or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage and suffer from heatstroke and become fatigued. Characters in heavy clothing or armor suffer a –4 penalty on the save. See the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 303, for more information on heat dangers.

Creatures (EL 0 or 3): Three large gnolls with burnt patches of fur and blacksmith's aprons oversee the heating of a vat of pitch atop the kiln. When they see the PCs, they immediately grab the cherry-red fire pokers used to stir the kiln and attack. If an alarm has been sounded, these gnolls have ascended to the archer's deck (area **11b**), in which case this chamber is empty.

Gnoll Kiln Workers (3): hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 130, except Atk +3 melee (1d6+2 plus 1d4 fire, hot poker).

Tactics: The gnolls attempt to bull rush Small PCs into the kiln (damage 5d6; Reflex DC 20 for half). The searing pokers cool off after 3 rounds, negating the extra fire damage.

Development: The kiln enables the gnolls to boil oil and prepare heated shot for the heavy catapult in area 12. On occasion, the H'Jyord orders the kiln snuffed when the beast is attempting a "stealth run" to prevent the smoke plume from giving away their location. If the PCs board the kadtanach after it crosses Howling Spirit Pass, the gnolls have already fired up the kiln in preparation for the raid on Gheldaylin. The plume of smoke can be seen up to a mile away.

12. CATAPULT PLATFORM (EL VARIES)

Trap (EL 4): The outer rim of this platform is protected by a "Warning Cry" magic mouth, while the center is blanketed with a "Black Tentacles" trap.

Evard's Black Tentacles Trap: see "Black Tentacles" above.

When the PCs have dealt with the trap and actually gained the surface of this deck, read or paraphrase the following:

> You've reached a large, open wooden deck. To your left and right, just past the edges of the deck, you can see the tops of the great beast's shoulder blades heave each time one of its front legs takes a gigantic step. At the same time, you can feel the deck hiccup slightly with each step.
>
> A huge catapult in the center of the deck stands ready to launch missiles over the beast's head at targets below. The catapult is presently loaded with the top half of a broken statue—another twisted frozen image of a knight of Heironeous in agony.
>
> A smaller wooden basket, hanging from the bow of the deck, houses a ballista on a tripod.

This large, *ironwood* deck is supported by a central arm attached to the kadtanach's yoke.

Heavy Catapult: 6d6, or 6d6 plus 1d6 fire for flaming ammunition; range increment 200 feet; load time 1 round (with crew of four). See the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 99, for more information on siege weaponry.

Ballista: 3d8/19–20; range increment 120 feet; load time 2 rounds. The ammunition rack houses 48 ballista javelins.

Creatures (EL 5): The catapult is manned by a crew of four gnolls. A small basket hanging at the platform's forward facing tip holds a mounted ballista inside, covering potential targets at the kadtanach's front and sides. The ballista is manned by a single gnoll.

Gnoll Catapult Crew (4): hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 130.

Gnoll Ballista Crew: hp 11; *Monster Manual* 130.

If an alarm has not yet been sounded, one of the gnolls blows a signal horn tied to the frame of the catapult before joining the fray. If the PCs trigger the "Black Tentacles" trap, the tentacles also attack the gnoll catapult crew if they get within range.

A folded rope ladder is tucked inside the basket. The ladder is used for accessing the yoke howdah (area 13b). The gnoll is instructed to detach the rope ladder and hurl it overboard at the first sign of trouble to minimize the possibility of an intruder gaining access to the yoke howdah.

13. YOKE HOWDAH (EL 1)

This howdah houses the piloting center for the kadtanach. It is made from bamboo protected by an *ironwood* spell. It has also been carefully *wood shaped*.

As a security precaution, the yoke howdah is quite hard to access from the outside. The H'Jyord *teleports* in and out as he pleases, and the few minions who have access here lower themselves from the ballista basket at area 12b and climb through the forward-facing window. Otherwise, to enter one must traverse the beast's shoulder blades, climb up the yoke, and scale the howdah walls to breach the windows. Navigating the shoulder blades while the beast is moving requires a successful Balance or Climb check (DC 15). Failure results in a fall to the ground 100 feet below (10d6 falling damage).

Trap: PCs climbing the 15-foot-high outer howdah walls discover the walls have been inset with razor-sharp shavings of *ironwood* covered with poison.

Poisoned *Ironwood* Shavings: CR 1; mechanical; touch trigger; automatic reset; Atk +8 melee (1 plus Malyss root paste poison: Fortitude save, DC 16, negates; 1 temporary Dex/2d4 temporary Dex); Search (DC 22); Disable Device (DC 18).

The shavings cannot harm PCs with metal gauntlets and hard-heeled boots. The tiny blades also damage ropes with a successful attack and after a few rounds may sever climbing equipment while PCs are in the process of scaling the howdah walls.

The windows are both shuttered and *arcane locked*, save for a single open window on the forward facing side where the H'Jyord's minions climb in. However, unless a PC lowers herself from the ballista basket above, to access (or even notice) the open window the PC must first climb around the front of the howdah and risk contacting more poisoned *ironwood* shavings.

Window Shutters: 1 inch thick; Hardness 5; hp 15; break DC 28.

13A. CROW'S NEST

This crow's nest is left empty to keep up the pretense that the yoke howdah is unimportant. The gnoll manning the ballista at area 12b is positioned just overhead, keeping a sharp eye out for intruders. The nest does not connect to the lower decks.

13B ELITE GUARD CHAMBER (EL VARIES)

> Only one window is open; the others have been securely shuttered. The narrow window provides a dizzying view of the small tower built on top of the beast's head. You see the tower bob up and down in time with the beast's march.
>
> Inside this smaller circular howdah, a sputtering lantern hangs from a large rusted hook in the ceiling's center. In the middle of the floor directly below the lantern is a round trapdoor with a thick iron pull-ring. The bamboo walls are covered with paw prints made from smears of red and black paint.

Creature (EL 0 or 5): This room is an ambush site for the H'Jyord's elite gnoll guardians. It acts as the final barrier between

intruders and the control center of the kadtanach. Although the floor and walls are made of bamboo protected by an *ironwood* spell, the ceiling itself is only a thin layer of mundane bamboo. Above the false ceiling is a cramped chamber where the gnolls lie in wait in the dark, spying on the room below through thin openings in the wood. In a raid or if an alarm has sounded, the elite gnolls have relocated to area 8b.

The gnolls delay their strike until the PCs become distracted trying to open the trapdoor in the floor. They then break through the ceiling in a single round, leap down, and attack.

The rickety lantern hanging from the ceiling is a *lantern of revealing* and it purges any *invisibility* effect in the room. It continues to operate even after it falls to the floor once the gnolls tear the ceiling apart.

The false ceiling can be detected with a Spot check (DC 25). If they fail to notice the false ceiling, the PCs are surprised.

Elite Gnolls, Male Gnoll Ftr1 (4): CR 2; Medium Humanoid (gnoll); HD 2d8+4 plus 1d10+2; hp 22 each; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16; BAB +2; Grap +5; Atk/Full Atk +7 melee (2d6+4, masterwork greatsword); AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 17, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Skills: Climb +2*, Listen +2, Spot +3. *Feats:* Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

*Includes –2 armor check penalty.

Possessions: Chain shirt, masterwork greatsword, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, 1d4 *continual flame* beads, leather pouch containing 25 gp.

As a symbol of their elite rank, the gnoll guardians have braided their thick manes with black beads from the H'Jyord that burn with *continual flames*. This creates the illusion that the gnolls' heads are eerily engulfed in flames.

Tactics: The gnolls follow the orders of the H'Jyord fanatically and will not permit any of the PCs to descend to the command deck under any circumstances, opening themselves to attacks of opportunity if necessary. If the PCs flee the howdah the gnolls do not leave their post to pursue. They instead call for other gnolls in the fortress to take up the chase.

Once the PCs best the gnoll guardians they can return their attention to the trapdoor.

Locked Trapdoor: 2 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 20; break DC 28; Open Lock DC 22.

Trap (EL 1): Gnu Dalcom has coated the pull ring with a powerful, clear-colored, herbal adhesive. The gnolls gain a +4 bonus to attack creatures stuck to the ring.

Adhesive Trap: CR 1; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; no attack roll necessary (creature touching adhesive is stuck; Reflex save, DC 20, avoids; adhesive can be permanently neutralized with alcohol or pulling free with a Strength check, DC 27, which deals 1d6 points of damage); Search (DC 20).

13C. COMMAND DECK (EL 6)

An alien, azure symbol blankets almost the entire floor except for a thin, foot-wide stretch of wood circling the edge of the room. A lone gnoll seated in a high-backed chair stares vacuously at the wooden wall. He wears an over-sized bone helmet.

Standing directly behind the seated gnoll is a smaller, finely muscled humanoid with the head of a canine. Barbed spikes line his leather armor and the battle chain folded across his back.

Although the PCs might suspect the presence of a magic ward on the floor, the markings are non-magical. Sylkess uses the design as a focus point for her *teleport* spells. She infrequently travels here to issue orders to the kadtanach pilot, the near-catatonic gnoll facing the wall.

Creatures: PCs who succeed at a Spot check (DC 15) notice that the gnoll's helm bears runs identical in style and appearance to runes on the yolk worn by the kadtanach. This gnoll has the coveted honor of wearing *Davnak's helm* and is piloting the kadtanach. While wearing the helm, he cannot engage in combat and is considered helpless. The pilot sees through the kadtanach's eyes, so he cannot see the PCs (see the sidebar for more information on *Davnak's helm*). The pilot nervously ignores any sounds of combat, under orders to maintain control of the kadtanach at all times.

Gnoll Pilot: hp 11; *Monster Manual* 130, except the gnoll is currently helpless and cannot attack unless *Davnak's helm* is first removed.

The H'Jyord normally spends his time *teleporting* between the vantage points at areas 9a and 16b, where he takes stock of the terrain, and here, where he issues orders to the pilot. When the PCs arrive in the piloting chamber, the H'Jyord is already here, prepared to defend his prize.

The H'Jyord, Mirror-of-Opposition Hound Archon Ftr2: CR 6; Medium Outsider (6 ft. 2 in. tall); HD 6d8+6 plus 2d10+2; hp 51; Init +4; Spd 40 ft.; AC 22, touch 10, flat-footed 22; BAB +8/+3; Grap +11; Atk +12 melee (2d4+5, *+1 spiked chain*), or +11 melee (1d8+3, bite), or +9 ranged (1d8/19–20, masterwork light crossbow); Full Atk +11 melee (1d8+3, bite) and +6 (1d4+1, slam), or +12/+7 melee (2d4+5, *+1 spiked chain*) and +6 melee (1d8+1, bite), or +9 ranged (1d8/19–20, masterwork light crossbow); Reach 10 ft. with chain; SA spell-like abilities; SQ archon subtype, change shape, damage reduction 10/holy†, outsider type, scent; SR 16; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +6; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills: Concentration +10, Diplomacy +3, Hide +9*, Intimidate +5, Jump +11, Listen +10, Move Silently +9, Sense Motive +10, Spot +10, Survival +10* (+12 following tracks). *Feats:* Combat Expertise, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Track.

Possessions: +1 spiked chain, masterwork studded leather, masterwork light crossbow with 24 *screaming bolts, potion of cure moderate wounds* ×2.

The H'Jyord deals damage as an unholy† weapon.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*aid, continual flame, detect good*†, and *message*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 6th-level cleric.

Change Shape (Su): Hound archons can assume any canine form of Small to Large size. While in canine form, the hound archon loses its bite, slam, and weapon attacks, but gains the bite attack of the form it chooses. For the purposes of this ability, canines include any dog- or wolf-like animal of the Animal type.

Archon Subtype: Archons are a race of celestials, or good outsiders, native to the plane of Celestia. This archon is evil.

Aura of Menace (Su): An unholy† aura surrounds the H'Jyord when he fights or gets angry. Any hostile creature within a 20-foot radius of the archon must succeed at a Will save (DC 16) or suffer a –2 morale penalty to attacks, AC, and saves for one day or until they successfully hit the H'Jyord. A creature that has resisted or broken the effect cannot be affected again by the H'Jyord's aura for one day.

- Darkvision 60 feet and low-light vision.
- Immune to electricity and petrification.
- +4 bonus to saves against poison

Magic Circle against Good (Su)†: A *magic circle against good* effect always surrounds the H'Jyord, identical to the spell cast by a 6th-level cleric. The effect can be dispelled, but the archon can create it again during its next turn as a free action. (The defensive benefits from the circle are not included in the statistics block.)

Teleport (Su): The H'Jyord can *greater teleport* at will, as the spell cast by a 14th-level sorcerer, except that the creature can transport only itself and up to 50 pounds of objects.

Tongues (Su): All archons can speak with any creature that has a language, as though using a *tongues* spell cast by a 14th-level cleric. This ability is always active.

Skills: *While in canine form, a hound archon gains a +4 circumstance bonus on Hide and Survival checks.

†Note that these are the reverse of the normal hound archon abilities.

See the *Monster Manual* for more information on the archon subtype, the outsider type, and hound archons.

Tactics: "H'Jyord" means "tracker of truth" in Celestial. The original H'Jyord pursued his foes relentlessly. His double, however, has adopted the opposite tactics, and finds his innate abilities surprisingly well suited to the task. Despite his strength and bravado, the H'Jyord avoids direct confrontation, preferring to soften enemies up with his gnoll fodder. If the PCs have made it this far, the H'Jyord is the only thing standing between them and *Davnak's helm*. Rather than abandon the centerpiece of his plan, he engages the PCs until he can lure them away from the command deck and into the open. If the PCs refuse to take the bait, the H'Jyord takes *Davnak's helm* and *teleports* away with it to another howdah. This means the kadtanach is uncontrolled until the H'Jyord can recruit another gnoll to pilot the beast. (See the *Davnak's helm* sidebar for details on what happens if the kadtanach remains uncontrolled for long.)

Once outside, the H'Jyord rouses any remaining gnolls into strike teams. He summons their aid with his *message* spell-like ability or by *teleporting* from howdah to howdah.

The H'Jyord also seeks out Seigonas from area **9a** if the PCs have not already defeated the gargoyle. Even if his minions fail him entirely, the H'Jyord is unwilling to abandon his prized kadtanach without a fight. The H'Jyord hunts the PCs using his scent and *detect good* abilities. Once he spots the PCs, he *teleports* to an ideal ambush site. He continually taunts the PCs with *message* spells to keep them off balance, uncertain of which direction he will strike from ("I select you to die next. . . ." is a favorite taunt). When the opportunity arise, he fires his *screaming crossbow bolts*. As soon as the PCs pinpoint his location and are able to retaliate, the H'Jyord *teleports* away and begins the game anew.

If the H'Jyord heard his elite gnoll guardians battling the PCs in area **13b** above, he has already activated his *aid* ability on himself in preparation for combat.

14. RIGHT EAR BASKET (EL VARIES)

A sliding trapdoor on the roof of this pod enables the PCs to drop down into the chamber.

Sliding Trapdoor: 1 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 10; break DC 18.

> This cramped, podlike room is almost filled to capacity by a 6-foot-long, six-legged, tan lizard that faces the front of the room. The creature's head has been completely wrapped in a thick black horse blanket, and the head and neck have been encased in a torturous metal brace. The brace locks around the lizard's skull and connects it to the walls with taut chains, holding the creature in place before a large, shuttered window. The lizard's tail hangs limply, and you can see from its exposed ribs that it is in terrible physical condition.
>
> A gnoll stands on each side of the lizard, scrubbing the creature's bony spine with a brush and a bucket of soapy water. Seeing you, they drop their buckets and reach for their weapons.

Creature (EL 2 or 5): The lizard is a basilisk. Immune to petrification, the H'Jyord was able to get close enough to trick the dangerous predator into captivity. Now a chained prisoner for several months, the basilisk's muscles have begun to atrophy. It survives mostly by the healing magic and herbs provided to it by Gnu-Dalcom. As a result of its unique diet, not only does its petrifying gaze still function, its range has increased to 60 feet.

Atrophied Basilisk: hp 45; *Monster Manual* 24, except this specimen is CR 1 if the PCs are inside the basket and CR 5 if the PCs are outside. Also, this basilisk is held in place and cannot move, and its Strength is now 10 due to the long period of inactivity.

Gnoll Basilisk Handlers (2): hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 130.

Fortunately for the PCs, the metal brace prevents the basilisk from turning away from the shuttered window in front of it.

Tactics: The basilisk is used as a surprise weapon against heavy opposition. First, an order is given from the command center, either by a signal horn or direct instruction from the H'Jyord. The gnoll handlers then open the windows, allowing the creature to peer through the barred windows. At the same time, the pilot commands the kadtanach to bow its head low to the ground to maximize the range of the gaze attack.

The gnolls have practiced this maneuver. The gnoll surface troops then ride out and either smash the statutes into powder or retrieved the statues and haul them atop the kadtanach, where they are used as ammunition for the catapult in area 12.

Inside the howdah, the basilisk is powerless. The PCs should receive no XP for slaughtering the beast while it's chained and covered. If one handler drops, the other tears off the blanket and remove the brace (a single full-round action), forcing the PCs to contend with the basilisk after all.

15. LEFT EAR BASKET (EL VARIES)

This over-sized basket has been secured to the left side of the kadtanach's helm. A sliding trapdoor on the roof is the only way inside.

Sliding Trapdoor: 1 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 10; break DC 18.

Creatures (EL 1): Two gnoll handlers sit atop the basket next to the trapdoor. One has a large leather bag filled with dried meat to reward the monstrous spider imprisoned below, and the other has a 10-foot long, barbed, prodding stick to poke it when it misbehaves. During a raid, one of these unlucky gnolls mans the head crow's nest (area 16a).

Gnoll Handlers (2): hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 130.

If the PCs open the trapdoor read or paraphrase the following:

> The trapdoor slides open with a dull click, revealing a giant, 10-foot-wide spider. The massive beast fills the entire pod. It immediately shuffles around on its spindly legs, turning away from the single round window in the pod to attack.

Creature (EL 2): In addition to the basilisk in area 14, the H'Jyord captured a large spider and imprisoned it in this pod. The pod was *wood shaped* open to accommodate the creature, then the pod opening was sealed to its current size to trap it within. The gnolls have trained the spider to cast its web at non-gnoll targets on the ground. The spider then reels in the ensnared victim at a rate of 10 feet per round. Once the victim nears the kadtanach's head, the kadtanach frequently takes a moment to swallow the spider's prisoner whole depriving the spider of its meal. As a result, the spider aggressively targets every non-gnoll it can spot, relying on the law of averages to at last drag a meal inside the pod.

Large Monstrous Spider: hp 22; *Monster Manual* 289.

Tactics: Unless the PCs drop into the pod below, only a single PC can attack the spider through the trapdoor at a time. The spider is unable to exit the pod and if the PCs attack with a reach weapon (such as the handler's pole, which acts as a longspear) they can dispatch the spider from safety. The spider has cover from any ranged attacks made through the trapdoor.

Ad-hoc XP Award: The PCs should receive only 50% of the normal XP for defeating the trapped spider.

16. HEAD HOWDAH

This howdah is particularly unstable. PCs and gnolls alike receive a –4 circumstance penalty to all attacks and skill checks as long as they remain here. Spellcasting requires a Concentration check (DC 10 + the level of the spell cast).

16A. CROW'S NEST

As you grab the wooden guardrail, you question the wisdom of the architect who placed a tower this high atop the beast's head. The nest sways with each bob of the beast's head.

The gnolls only man this post during raids, at which time a gnoll from the left ear basket (area 15) is stationed here.

16B. THE FLOOD LIGHT (ARCHER'S DECK; EL 2)

This deck houses the gnolls' "floodlight": a cluster of *continual flame* stones, focused by a mirrored case. The oversized lantern is on a tripod and the gnolls can sweep the ground in front of the kadtanach out to a range of 200 feet with a 10-foot-radius light beam. The floodlight is surprisingly functional and fetches 450 gp if sold to an interested buyer. It weighs 200 pounds, though, so getting it down could be tricky.

Creatures: Two gnolls are always stationed here, protecting the valuable floodlight during the day and sweeping the land below with it at night.

Gnolls (2): hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 130.

A large spindly ladder with bone rungs provides access to the crow's nest above or the troop hold below.

16C. TROOP HOLD

When he decides it is worthwhile, the H'Jyord allocates some of his troops and packs a boarding party inside this hold. On command, the gnolls operate the folding bridge at area 16d and swarm over defensive walls to break into opposing compounds.

Creatures: Between raids, three gnolls are stationed here, ready to respond if an alarm sounds.

Gnolls (3): hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 130.

The inside walls of this hold are covered with a giant mural of the kadtanach descending upon a human settlement, recently finger-painted by gnolls awaiting battle. PCs who take time to study the details of the mural carefully (Spot DC 20) obtain clues of the kadtanach's layout: the mural crudely depicts a tentacle from the black tentacles trap in area 10a ripping apart a human warrior; a villager being ensnared by the web of the giant spider in area 15; and the assassin vine in area 5 reaching out from inside Gnu Dalcom's pod

16D. THE BRIDGE

The kadtanach can bow its head to align the bridge with defensive walls. The gnolls then extend the bridge with a wide folding plank and the landing party in area 16c can charge out onto the defenders' parapet. Extending the plank has to be coordinated carefully with the command center so that the pilot can give full concentration to steadying the beast's head. In a prior raid, the beast shook its head while the bridge was in mid-extension, sending the entire landing party to its death.

17. THE BATTERING RAM

A large horn on the kadtanach's head has been covered by an *ironwood* ram. Unlike a normal ram, the kadtanach can drive the ram forward every second round and deliver much greater damage (8d6+4). The ram is normally used only against structures.

CONCLUSION

If the PCs disable the kadtanach by destroying *Davnak's helm* or by toppling its leadership, Gheldaylin and the surrounding settlements are saved. Rather than roleplaying a complete mop-up operation, once the climactic encounters are concluded, have the replenished Knights of Heironeous return to assist the PCs in driving off remaining gnolls.

Once the kadtanach is free from magical control for 30 minutes, it begins to shake off its yolk. After 1d8 hours of vigorous shakes, coupled with some rubs against a cliff-side, the entire howdah complex is unceremoniously dumped on the ground. Once the helm is destroyed, the magic binding the kadtanach to the Prime Material Plane begins to decay. By dawn, the kadtanach winks out of sight and returns to its home plane—the Wilderness of the Beastlands (treat as a *banishment* spell).

The Knights offer to accompany the PCs to Gheldaylin to host a banquet in the PCs' honor, if it still stands. Over the next few days, Gheldaylin swells with refugees from the surrounding destroyed communities. If the H'Jyord or Sylkess escaped, the PCs might wish to pursue them. Sylkess cuts her losses, but the H'Jyord never forgives the PCs for ruining his campaign.

Ad-hoc XP Award: If the PCs defeat the H'Jyord before Gheldaylin is destroyed, they should each receive a 1,000 XP story award.

APPENDIX

THE KADTANACH

Colossal Magical Beast (Extraplanar)
Hit Dice: 28d10+364 (518 hp)
Initiative: –1 (Dex)
Speed: 60 ft. or 40 ft. (with saddle)
AC: 21 (–9 size, –1 Dex, +21 natural) or 29 with hide barding, touch 1, flat-footed 21
Base Attack/Grapple: +21/+49
Attack: +25 melee
Full Attack: +25 melee
Damage: Bite 4d6+18/19–20
Space/Reach: 60 ft./30 ft.
Special Attacks: Improved grab, swallow whole, trample
Special Qualities: DR 15/magic, immunities, regeneration 5
Saves: Fort +29, Ref +17, Will +11
Abilities: Str 35, Dex 8, Con 36, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 10
Skills: Listen +14, Spot +13.
Feats: Alertness, Cleave, Endurance, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Overrun, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack
Climate/Terrain: Any land (Beastlands)
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 16

Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 29–84 HD (Colossal)

The kadtanach was originally discovered by a secret cabal of lawful neutral loremasters known as the Daegoth-Szonri. The Daegoth-Szonri sought to fund their endless research by opening a merchant company. To compete, they decided to design a merchant caravan that would be impervious to bandit attacks so they could trade in even the most inhospitable and lucrative regions.

Their researches into the planes led them to, they believed, the perfect subject for their ambitious project. The kadtanach blended incredible resilience, a massive and intimidating presence, and a natural placidity and easily manipulated temperament. It was the ultimate pack mule. However, although the ground work was performed, the project of relocating the kadtanach to the Prime Material Plane and harnessing it for the merchant caravan was eventually shelved as the Daegoth-Szonri's attention turned to a growing feud with a rival wizard clan. One of the loremasters chiefly responsible for the project, a man named Davnak, was Sylkess's mentor, and the young student learned of the abandoned project. Throughout her tenure, Sylkess secretly coveted the project's power. She never attained the status of a loremaster herself, as she lacked the discipline and was ultimately refused admittance to the Daegoth-Szonri. However, years later, after her former mentor was killed in the feud, Sylkess returned to steal the project and ran off with the kadtanach scroll library and *Davnak's helm*.

Sylkess was working out the details of how to best capitalize upon her "inheritance" when she caught the attention of a group of celestials, and a hound archon (the original H'Jyord) was dispatched to stop her. After her desperate *mirror of opposition* ambush, the double encouraged Sylkess to finish her endless preparation and at last perform the incantations necessary to finish the project, which involved calling the beast and binding it to the Prime using its yoke as an anchoring device.

The ritual detailed in the scrolls was successful, and the kadtanach was harnessed and saddled. While the fitting and construction were completed, the H'Jyord set about rounding up an army.

Other kadtanaches roam the Beastlands, but the beasts are extremely rare, meeting only once every decade or so to mate.

COMBAT

Left to its own devices, the omnivorous kadtanach roams the Wilderness of the Beastlands, eating constantly to keep its tremendous metabolism satiated. In battle, the kadtanach uses its massive jaws to pick up, crush, and devour the bodies of its prey. Those who prove difficult to slay with an initial bite are shaken by the beast until dead, or simply swallowed whole, although the kadtanach doesn't particularly enjoy slurping down live food. Even under the control of the wearer of *Davnak's helm*, the kadtanach's battle tactics remain the same.

Improved Grab (Ex): If a kadtanach hits an opponent that is at least one size category smaller than itself with a bite attack, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity (grapple bonus +49). If it gets a hold, it can swallow the opponent on its next successful grapple check. Thereafter, the kadtanach has the option to conduct the grapple normally, or simply use its bite to hold the opponent (–20 penalty on grapple check , but the kadtanach is not considered grappled). In either case, each successful grapple check it makes during successive rounds automatically deals bite damage.

Worry (Ex): A kadtanach that successfully gets a hold on an opponent with its improved grab ability shakes the victim violently back and forth. This attack deals bite damage each round until the victim breaks free, the kadtanach is slain, or the victim dies.

Swallow Whole (Ex): A kadtanach can swallow a single creature that is at least two size categories smaller than itself by making a successful grapple check (grapple bonus +49), provided it already has that opponent in its maw (see Improved Grab, above). Once inside the kadtanach, the opponent takes 4d6+18 points of bludgeoning damage and 2d6 points of acid damage per round from the kadtanach's stomach. A successful grapple check allows the creature to climb out of the stomach and return to the kadtanach's maw; from there another successful grapple check is needed to get free. Alternatively, a swallowed creature can try to cut its way out with either claws or a light piercing or slashing weapon. Dealing a total of at least 30 points of damage to the stomach (AC 17) in this way creates an opening large enough to permit escape. Once a single swallowed creature exits, muscular action closes the hole; thus, another swallowed opponent must cut its own way out. A kadtanach's maw can hold 2 Huge, 4 Large, or 16 Medium or smaller opponents.

Frightful Presence (Su): A kadtanach can unsettle foes with its mere presence. The ability takes effect automatically whenever the kadtanach attacks or charges. Creatures within a radius of 60 feet are subject to the effect if they have fewer HD than the kadtanach.

A potentially affected creature that succeeds at a Will save (DC 24) remains immune to the kadtanach's frightful presence for one day. On a failure, creatures with 4 or fewer HD become panicked for 4d6 rounds and those with 5 or more HD become shaken for 4d6 rounds. A kadtanach ignores the frightful presence of others of its kind.

Immunities (Ex): The kadtanach is immune to all mind-affecting magic and psionics until *Davnak's helm* is destroyed. The kadtanach loses this ability if it does not have the helm.

Note that the kadtanach in "Beast of Burden" is wearing hide barding, so its AC is 29 as described in the statistics above. Ω

Michael Kortes would like to thank Sam Wood for his sketch art, which formed the catalyst for "Beast of Burden," and apologizes in advance to any players whose PCs might be inadvertently squashed into origami strips by a misstep of the kadtanach.

THE LICH-QUEEN'S BELOVED

BY CHRISTOPHER PERKINS

ARTWORK BY TOM BAXA & WAYNE REYNOLDS • CARTOGRAPHY BY CHRISTOPHER WEST

"The Lich-Queen's Beloved" is a challenging D&D adventure designed for four 18th-level characters. It can be played as a stand-alone adventure or as the climax of an Incursion campaign centered around a githyanki invasion, as presented in *Dragon Magazine* #309. The adventure can be played using standard hero races (humans, elves, and such) or githyanki heroes who seek to overthrow their hated lich-queen. For more information on playing githyanki heroes, see the *Polyhedron* side of this issue. For more information on the githyanki capital of Tu'narath, see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" Web enhancement (www.paizo.com).

You will need all three revised D&D core rulebooks to run this adventure, which takes place in a githyanki city on the Astral Plane. Before running the adventure, you should familiarize yourself with the traits of the Astral Plane, as described in Chapter 5 of the revised *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Player characters (PCs) who complete the adventure should amass sufficient experience points to advance to 20th level, assuming they survive the perils of the githyanki lich-queen's palace. A canny group of 16th- or 17th-level characters can survive the adventure if they have more members, plenty of healing magic, a few stalwart cohorts, and a powerful planar ally or two. Conversely, a group of 19th- or 20th-level heroes will have an easier time with some encounters, but even they should find the tougher encounters challenging, particularly if they are careless or poorly equipped.

BACKGROUND

Vlaakith CLVII, the reigning sovereign of the githyanki race, is the legitimate descendant of the original Vlaakith, and her word is law. Unlike her predecessors, however, she is a lich, has no heirs, and in her undead state is now unable to produce them. Vlaakith demands unswerving loyalty and obedience from her people, and few dare question her resolve or her wisdom. She sequesters herself in her forlorn palace and is rarely seen by her subjects. She views undeath merely as a transitional state and strives to become a true god, attaining true immortality and power as vast as the Astral Plane itself.

Vlaakith jealously guards her throne by devouring the essences of her most powerful followers. Any githyanki who rises above 16th level must stand before her in the Palace of Whispers and be judged. Most come to her willingly, sped to their doom by blinding loyalty or pride. Cowards and others who try to avoid their ultimate fate are hunted down, captured, and dragged before the lich-queen in *dimensional anchor* shackles. In every instance, Vlaakith destroys the potential usurper and feeds on the individual's power.

The lich-queen uses her *crown of corruption* (an artifact crafted by one of her ancestors) to transform devoured githyanki whom she favors into obedient undead servants. The tl'a'ikith (former githyanki knights) manifest as incorporeal githyanki wielding spectral versions of the swords they held in life. The kr'y'izoth (former githyanki warlocks and gish) manifest as entities of flickering black flame swathed in tattered robes and bandages. Those who earn the lich-queen's undying wrath (including nongithyanki brought before her) are devoured utterly. As zombies, they wander the halls of Susurrus as rotting mockeries of their former greatness. Githyanki who neither impress nor infuriate the lich-queen have their spirits trapped within her palace's whispering walls so that Vlaakith can hear their grim cacophony and take comfort in the fact that they cannot harm her.

THE DUTHKA'GITHS

Years after the githyanki claimed the Astral Plane as their home, Vlaakith I began advising Gith, the githyanki liberator and ruler, in matters of state. In the pursuit of powerful allies, Vlaakith advised Gith to descend into the Nine Hells and meet with the legendary Tiamat, queen of evil dragons. Gith agreed, and soon thereafter an eternal pact was forged between the githyanki and red dragons.

Ephelomon, Tiamat's red dragon consort, visited the Astral Plane and informed Vlaakith I of the pact. He also reported that Gith would remain in Baator and that she had chosen Vlaakith I as her successor. Gith's last command was that her people continue their legacy of conquest. Whenever the githyanki ventured to the Material Plane, they would find staunch allies

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among red dragons lairing there. Vlaakith I and her descendants have maintained this pact in the years since, carving lairs for numerous dragons in the rocky hillsides near the githyanki capital city of Tu'narath, luring red dragons to the Astral Plane with promises of long lives and vast troves.

Unable to sire children of her own, Vlaakith the Lich-Queen has taken her people's pact with red dragons to a new level by creating the duthka'giths, fearless and brutal githyanki with red dragon blood. Originally created by an arcane spell of Vlaakith's devising, the duthka'gith can now create progeny of their own. Duthka'gith hatcheries can be found in many secret locations on the Material Plane. (See Polyhedron pages 10 and 34 for more information on the duthka'gith.) Duthka'giths that survive to adulthood often return to the Astral Plane to serve as elite shock troops and palace guards.

Most githyanki barely tolerate and secretly detest the duthka'giths. Some believe the lich-queen has perverted the pact with the red dragons and strayed from the wishes of Gith; others fear that the duthka'giths are the mad queen's attempt to "perfect" the githyanki race—a grim harbinger of worse things to come.

THE ONE IN THE VOID

After years of research, Vlaakith has uncovered a path to godhood. The lich-queen guards it well, for she cannot take the chance that a rival might walk the path before her. In her madness, however, she often speaks of a being called the One in the Void—the one who will bring her godhood.

"The One in the Void" is the name Vlaakith has given to the dead god atop which her palace and the githyanki capital city of Tu'narath are built. This god passed into obscurity long before Gith freed her people from the tyranny of the illithids, hundreds of centuries before the emergence of the githyanki and githzerai as distinct races. The dead god's true name is lost to the ages, and Vlaakith doesn't actually speak to it. However, the lich-queen knows that the stony corpse of this ancient god holds a spark of divine life. She intends to capture that spark, become the revered god of the githyanki, cast off the teachings of Gith, and give birth to a new supreme order governed by priests and duthka'giths who have sworn their eternal souls to her.

Capturing the life-spark of a dead god isn't a simple task, but Vlaakith believes she can accomplish her goal using multiple wishes. The endeavor has cost Vlaakith thousands of *wish* spells over her millennia-long reign. To cast so many *wishes* without reducing her own power, the lich-queen slays and devours her own servants, as well as any foe that dares cross her. Each life essence she consumes gives her the strength to continue her quest. (In game terms, she needs to recover the experience points she loses every time she casts a *wish* spell.)

How many *wish* spells does it take to capture the spark of divinity? The answer is unknown, but after a thousand years of casting spells and calling out to The One in the Void, Vlaakith believes her time is near—and she's not the only one. In the past several months, earthquakes have rocked the githyanki capital. Some believe that the "island" on which the city is built is merely unstable. Certain githyanki *hr'a'cknir* (seers), whose duties include studying, cataloging, and harnessing the energies of the Silver Void, suspect something more. They believe that the dead god is awakening and that Tu'narath is doomed. However, few see Vlaakith's hand in the earthquakes: The lich-queen's refusal to acknowledge the tremors as anything more than natural occurrences is dismissed as arrogance or perceived as a symptom of her centuries-old madness.

THE SHA'SAL KHOU AND THE CH'R'AI

The Sha'sal Khou are githyanki and githzerai radicals working toward the reunification of their respective peoples. They labor to end the warfare between the githyanki and githzerai and create a unified nation of gith. Members of the Sha'sal Khou work secretly within their respective societies, subtly discouraging attacks on the other gith race while carefully recruiting like-minded individuals. They maintain secret redoubts on the Material Plane as well.

The Sha'sal Khou hope to raise a proper army and establish a fortified enclave where their children will grow up calling themselves simply "gith." Their greatest ally is a powerful githyanki warlord named Zetch'r'r. He secretly supports the reunification of the githyanki and githzerai, but more importantly, he has the charisma and influence to lead the Sha'sal Khou and turn others toward their cause.

Zetch'r'r maintains a stronghold in Tu'narath, where he shelters other Sha'sal Khou members and plots against the lich-queen. He fears Vlaakith has created the duthka'giths in a mad attempt to "perfect" the githyanki race, and his most trusted *hr'a'cknir* reports that Vlaakith is behind the earthquakes threatening Tu'narath. Zetch'r'r believes that a unified gith nation under his august leadership will restore his people's failing resolve. Only under his rule can Gith's legacy of conquest continue.

The warlord's staunch opposition to Vlaakith worries other members of the Sha'sal Khou, who fear that the lich-queen might discover them and send her inquisitors—the Ch'r'ai—to capture and interrogate Zetch'r'r and his lieutenants.

The Ch'r'ai are githyanki spellcasters who believe Vlaakith is destined for godhood. They want a hand in creating the first true god of the githyanki people and hope that Vlaakith will, upon ascension, reward them with clerical powers. Led by a zealous githyanki warlock named Xam'kras, the Ch'r'ai are the lich-queen's greatest sycophants, entrusted with more power and influence in Tu'narath than some feel they rightly deserve. Vlaakith views them as instruments and potential rivals, but Xam'kras believes his order can win the lich-queen's favor by accomplishing the myriad tasks she sets before them.

Zetch'r'r dares not upset the Sha'sal Khou's plans by opposing Vlaakith directly. He has two options: He can send an independent githyanki strike force to destroy the lich-queen, or he can solicit aid from a group of non-githyanki heroes who have effectively opposed his people in the past.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

In this adventure, the heroes invade Susurrus, the palace of the githyanki lich-queen, and attempt to end Vlaakith's reign forever. The adventure begins when Zetch'r'r, a githyanki warlord, petitions the heroes to confront and destroy Vlaakith. However, the lich-queen's spies know of Zetch'r'r's treachery and are preparing to deal with him and the PCs.

USING GITHYANKI HEROES

When githyanki heroes reach 16th level, their glorious achievements begin to attract the attention of the Ch'r'ai and the lich-queen. If she is not preoccupied with more pressing matters, Vlaakith orders the Ch'r'ai to bring the would-be champions to her palace in Tu'narath—one at a time, of course—so that she may "reward" them with death. Most githyanki accept their fate with blind obedience and fatalistic resolve. The PCs are different, however. This adventure assumes that the PCs have thus far avoided their fatal meeting with the lich-queen and are consequently out of favor. Perhaps they have even survived one or more altercations with members of the Ch'r'ai. Even as fugitives, the PCs' past deeds have earned them some prestige within githyanki factions that secretly oppose the lich-queen and her plans for the githyanki people.

The adventure begins when Zetch'r'r sends two members of the Sha'sal Khou to meet with the heroes and escort them to Zetch'r'r's stronghold on the Astral Plane. There, the PCs learn of Zetch'r'r's glorious plans to unite the githyanki people in a mission of conquest against the mind flayers. In exchange for destroying the lich-queen and her phylactery, Zetch'r'r promises the PCs whatever their hearts desire: a stronghold, a military command, or a place in his "new gith order." If the PCs despise githzerai, Zetch'r'r sends two githyanki (instead of one githyanki and one githzerai) to meet with them; the warlord also conceals his affiliation with the Sha'sal Khou—at least until the PCs complete their mission.

Zetch'r'r offers the heroes sanctuary in Tu'narath as they prepare for their assault on the lich-queen's palace. Zetch'r'r also provides the heroes with intelligence that will better prepare them for the perils awaiting them in Susurrus, the Palace of Whispers. Once inside Susurrus, the PCs must contend with its many traps and guardians before finally confronting Vlaakith. They must also locate and destroy the lich-queen's phylactery to make certain she never returns.

USING NON-GITHYANKI HEROES

If you are running this adventure using non-githyanki heroes, Zetch'r'r sends two representatives of the Sha'sal Khou to make contact with the PCs at their stronghold on the Material Plane (or wherever they happen to be). It is assumed that the heroes have either aided or opposed the githyanki in the past. Zetch'r'r hopes that their history of battles against the githyanki will fuel their hatred of the lich-queen. Moreover, he hopes that his alliance with the Sha'sal Khou will persuade the PCs that he isn't like other githyanki they've encountered before. The PCs are escorted to Zetch'r'r's stronghold on the Astral Plane, where the githyanki warlord explains his wish to unite the gith races and hunt down the illithids. He warns the PCs of the lich-queen's plans to create an army of half-dragon githyanki—an endeavor that could spell disaster for her enemies and all the peaceful races of the multiverse. Zetch'r'r and the Sha'sal Khou vow to leave the heroes' world in peace if they agree to destroy the lich-queen and her phylactery.

Zetch'r'r offers the PCs sanctuary in Tu'narath as they prepare for their assault on the lich-queen's palace. Zetch'r'r also provides them with information about the perils lurking in the lich-queen's palace. If they succeed in destroying Vlaakith and her phylactery, they will stop any further incursion by githyanki into their world, end the threat of the duthka'giths, and further Zetch'r'r's plan to reunite the githyanki and githzerai people against their common foes, the illithids.

THE SHA'SAL KHOU

If the PCs are primarily githyanki, Zetch'r'r sends two githyanki lieutenants to meet with them. If most of the PCs belong to races other than githyanki, Zetch'r'r sends two representatives of the Sha'sal Khou instead. Zetch'r'r's emissaries arrive at the PCs' stronghold or residence. Begin the encounter by reading or paraphrasing the following:

> Two figures clad in drab cloaks greet you, their faces half-hidden by cowls. Each of them carries a longbow and enough gear to suggest that they might be travelers or adventurers. One of them holds up a slender hand and says, "We are messengers sent by Zetch'r'r of Tu'narath, warlord of the Silver Void. Our lord asks to speak with you in person about an urgent matter threatening all the planes of existence."

If the PCs ask the strangers for their names, they oblige. PCs recognize Kel'i'lec as a githyanki. If the PCs are mostly githyanki, Saarys is a githyanki with statistics similar to Kel'i'lec; otherwise, she's a githzerai. PCs familiar with the githyanki and githzerai know that the two races share a deep hatred for one another. The notion of a githyanki and githzerai working together is almost unimaginable.

Saarys and Kel'i'lec do not voluntarily reveal their allegiance to the Sha'sal Khou. If asked how they overcame their races' long enmity, Saarys responds as follows:

> "Hatred is a powerful force. Long ago, the gith used hatred to overcome the tyranny of the illithids. In the eons since, we've allowed hatred to rule and weaken us. If the gith are to survive, we must focus our hatred on the ones who shackled us, repair the damage that war has wrought, and reunite our people. This is the way of the Sha'sal Khou. We are not alone in our beliefs, but we are admittedly few in number."

If the PCs ask for more information about Zetch'r'r and his summons, Kel'i'lec reveals the following:

"Zetch'r'r has a stronghold in the city of Tu'narath, on what you call the Astral Plane. There he plots to usurp Vlaakith, our demented lich-queen, and lead the githyanki down a different path—one not bent on the extermination of the githzerai, but the destruction of the illithids and their tyranny. Vlaakith has chosen a darker path for her subjects—a path that sees githyanki blood mixed with the blood of red dragons. She corrupts the eggs of unborn githyanki to create the duthka'giths—half-dragon abominations. Unless she is stopped, the day will come when all githyanki are born as duthka'giths. Were this to happen, the gith people could never be reunited.

"Only you can destroy the lich-queen, and Zetch'r'r can provide you with answers to your many questions. Will you accompany us to his stronghold?"

Creatures (EL 15): Saarys and Kel'i'lec fear that the lich-queen's servants might learn of Zetch'r'r's treachery too soon. If the PCs express concern about working with the githyanki warlord, Saarys and Kel'i'lec emphasize the following points:

- Zetch'r'r is a strong ally and an equally powerful enemy. To refuse his request might not be in the PCs' best interests.
- If the lich-queen learns of Zetch'r'r's treachery, she may send the Ch'r'ai (her servants) to capture and interrogate him to learn the identities of his collaborators. In other words, the PCs have already crossed Vlaakith by consorting with her enemy.
- If the PCs are seeking a reward, Zetch'r'r knows that the lich-queen's palace contains unimaginable treasures, none of which he desires. Conversely, he's willing to pay for their help with a future favor.

Saarys, Female Githzerai Mnk11: CR 13; Medium Humanoid (extraplanar); HD 11d8+11; hp 61; Init +3; Spd 60 ft.; AC 22, touch 18, flat-footed 20; BAB +8/+3; Grap +10; Atk +10 melee (1d10+2, unarmed strike) or +15 ranged (1d8+4/×3, masterwork composite longbow [+2 Str] with +2 *arrow*); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d10+2, unarmed strike) or +10/+10/+10/+5 melee (1d10+2, flurry of blows) or +15/+10 ranged (1d8+4/×3, masterwork composite longbow [+2 Str] with +2 *arrow*); SA greater flurry, *ki* strike (magic), psionics, unarmed strike; SQ darkvision 60 ft., diamond body, improved evasion, *inertial armor*, leap of the clouds, psionics, purity of body, slow fall 50 ft., still mind, wholeness of body (22 hp/day); SR 16; AL LN; SV Fort +8, Ref +11, Will +9; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 11.

Skills: Balance +10, Climb +7, Escape Artist +6, Hide +9, Jump +10, Knowledge (the planes) +1, Listen +6, Move Silently +10, Tumble +12. *Feats:* Blind-Fight, Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Improved Disarm, Mobility, Spring Attack, Stunning Fist.

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*daze* (save DC 10), *feather fall*, *shatter* (DC 12); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 17). Caster level 11th; save DC 10 + spell level.

***Inertial Armor* (Sp):** Githzerai can use psychic force to block an enemy's blows. This gives them a +4 armor bonus as long as they remain conscious.

Possessions: Belt of giant strength +4, amulet of health +2, potion of owl's wisdom, potion of cure moderate wounds, masterwork composite longbow [+2 Str] with 20 +2 *arrows*, gray cloak.

Kel'i'lec, Female Githyanki Wiz5/Ftr6: CR 13; Medium Humanoid (extraplanar); HD 6d10 plus 5d4; hp 50; Init +1; Spd 40 ft. (30 ft. base); AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16; BAB +8/+3; Grap +8; Atk +12 melee (2d6+4/17–20, +1 *keen greatsword*) or +10 ranged (1d8+1/×3 plus 1d6 electricity, +1 *shock longbow*); Full Atk +12/+7 melee (2d6+4/17–20, +1 *keen greatsword*) or +10/+5 ranged (1d8+1/×3 plus 1d6 electricity, +1 *shock longbow*); SA psionics, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., psionics; SR 16; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +7; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Concentration +8, Craft (weaponsmithing) +8, Jump +11, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (the planes) +9, Listen +6, Ride +8, Spellcraft +13, Spot +6. *Feats:* Alertness, Brew Potion, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Combat Expertise, Improved Trip, Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot, Quick Draw, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

***Psionics* (Sp):** At will—*clairaudience/clairvoyance, daze* (DC 9), *mage hand*; 3/day—*blur, dimension door, telekinesis* (DC 14); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 16). Caster level 11th; save DC 9 + spell level.

Wizard Spells Prepared (4/4/3/2; base save DC = 13 + spell level; 15% chance of spell failure): 0—*detect magic, open/close, read magic, resistance*; 1st—*magic missile* ×2, *ray of enfeeblement, shield*; 2nd—*invisibility, resist energy, see invisibility*; 3rd—*fireball, slow*.

Possessions: +2 studded leather armor, +1 keen greatsword, +1 shock longbow with 25 arrows, *ring of protection +1, cloak of resistance +1, boots of striding and springing, amulet of the planes, pearl of power* (1st), *potion of haste*, scroll of *scorching ray*, gray cloak.

Tactics: If attacked, Saarys and Kel'i'lec use their *plane shift* ability (or Kel'i'lec's *amulet of the planes*) to flee to the Astral Plane, where they alert Zetch'r'r.

Development: If the PCs insist that Zetch'r'r meet them on "their turf," Saarys and Kel'i'lec leave and relay the message. The next day, they return with a knight (11th-level githyanki fighter) posing as Zetch'r'r. The knight, I'akas, is one of Zetch'r'r's trusted lieutenants. If the PCs see through the ruse and refuse to meet with Zetch'r'r, the outraged warlord sends a task force to destroy the PCs, their cohorts, their hirelings, and their holdings. If the PCs destroy the task force, Zetch'r'r sends another. If the second task force fails, the warlord sends a third. If the heroes survive the third attack, Zetch'r'r leaves them alone for the time being. The initial task force consists of six 12th-level githyanki fighters astride juvenile red dragons (EL 20). Future task forces may include additional forces, larger dragons, or githyanki wizards.

If the PCs agree to meet with Zetch'r'r, Saarys and Kel'i'lec allow them to collect their gear and make whatever arrangements are required. When the PCs are ready, Kel'i'lec uses the *amulet of the planes* in her possession to transport herself, Saarys, and the PCs to Zetch'r'r's stronghold in Tu'narath.

Proper use of the *amulet of the planes* requires an Intelligence check (DC 15), with a failed check sending the group to a random location on the Astral Plane (a 01–60 result on d%) or to a random plane (a 61–00 result on d%). You can either assume that the *plane shift* is successful or make the Intelligence check and prepare contingencies to deal with the outcome.

TU'NARATH

The githyanki capital city is built on the body of a dead god adrift in the Astral Plane. The deific husk appears vaguely humanoid in shape, with a "head," an elongated body, and six radiating arms. Subjective directional gravity holds sway within 200 feet of the husk, allowing the city's inhabitants to walk normally. Creatures and objects moving within 200 feet of the city begin to fall as they enter the astral island's "gravity well." A series of mooring towers and landing platforms on the "head spikes" and "arms" of the island allow astral ships to dock.

Surrounding the city are several chunks of astral detritus atop which the githyanki have built small, fortified citadels. Chained to these "flying fortresses" are smaller chunks of rock with towers jutting out of them.

♛ **Tu'narath (Metropolis):** Conventional; AL LE; 100,000-gp limit; Assets 500,000,000 gp; Population: 100,000; Isolated (96% githyanki, 4% other).

Authority Figures: Vlaakith, female githyanki lich Wiz25 (CE); Yev'dakai (Commissar of Tu'narath), male githyanki Ftr15 (LE); Xam'kras (Master of the Ch'r'ai), male githyanki Wiz14 (CE); Zetch'r'r (warlord), male githyanki Ftr10/Blk5 (LE).

Common Male Githyanki Names: Bvid, Debrelx, Elirdain, Gaath, Galdvisk, Ja'adoc, J'ladmir, Joarth, Kar'i'nas, Kel'i'jith, Karluth, Lykus, N'a'rai, Ninir, Oso'jen, Quith, Rech, Ris'a'n, Su'lukel, Tehv'in, Terath, Tropos, Veldrada, Vheld'r'r, Viran, Xamodas, Zaryd'ai.

Common Female Githyanki Names: Aaryl, B'noor, Ch'a'nev, Dulurin, Eri'inth, Fenel, Fenelzi'ir, Haranor, Ilaareb, Jen'lig, Madivh, Malastra, Merical, Pah'zel, Quorstyl, Sharqad, Sirruth, Tarain, Tonuin'li, Un'ruth, Vaira, Vharist, Vo'ryd, Yessune, Zar'ryth.

ARCHITECTURE

Tu'narath's architecture reflects the githyanki militaristic mindset—ominous structures with flying buttresses and protruding wrought-iron spikes, but with enough décor to make them more than cold assemblages of stone and iron. Porticos are often adorned with sculptures and frescoes depicting githyanki champions riding red dragons, while beautifully carved statues of prominent githyanki dominate city squares. Buildings are densely packed, multi-story affairs joined by stone bridges on the upper levels. Bridges that span roadways are common sights in every district of Tu'narath.

The lich-queen dwells in Susurrus, an immense obsidian palace that rises from the forehead of the dead god. A great obsidian statue of Gith stands in front of the palace, looking out over the city.

LAWS

Githyanki society precludes the need for codified laws, since there is virtually no crime and all disputes are handled within a strict military chain of command. Although githyanki do not generally share space with other races, Tu'narath is cosmopolitan enough to host other races in its Merchant District. These races are allowed to conduct trade and come and go as they please (either by portal or astral ship), but they have few rights and are watched closely by githyanki patrols assigned to the district. In general, any creature capable of observing the city's codified laws is allowed to live and earn a living in Tu'narath—unless the githyanki Commissar or some higher authority dictates otherwise. Githzerai, mind flayers, and other blood-enemies of the githyanki are killed on sight. Harboring one in the city is a capital crime punishable by death.

Codified laws exist to deal with races prone to violating the order of things. In short, any wrong inflicted upon a githyanki—from the most heinous murder to a hateful glare—is punishable by death. Particularly heinous criminals are brought before the Commissar so that he may have the honor of killing the perpetrators personally. When a crime is committed against a non-

githyanki, both the accused and the accuser are dragged before the Commissar and given one chance to plead for justice. In most instances, the accused is presumed guilty and killed. In some instances, particularly when no githyanki are involved in the crime, both the accused and the accuser are deemed at fault and summarily slain, which is usually enough to discourage criminal acts and the willingness to report them.

EARTHQUAKES

The dead god atop which Tu'narath rests shudders each time Vlaakith casts a *wish* spell to capture what remains of its life essence. These tremors increase in magnitude as the lich-queen comes closer to achieving her goal. During a quake, PCs must succeed at a Reflex save (DC 15) or be knocked prone. The quake lasts 1d4 rounds, and a new Reflex save must be made each round of the quake.

If the PCs abandon their quest only to return weeks or months later, increase the DC of the Reflex save increases by +2 per week of expired game time to account for the increasing severity of the quakes.

THE POSTER MAP

This adventure includes a poster map depicting Tu'narath. The various keyed locations and city districts are described in "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" Web enhancement.

ZETCH'R'R'S STRONGHOLD

Zetch'r'r maintains a fortified estate in the city of Tu'narath. From there, he coordinates his troops, meets in secret with agents of the Sha'sal Khou, and quietly plots to overthrow the lich-queen. If the PCs agree to accompany Saarys (disguised as a githyanki) and Kel'i'lec to Zetch'r'r's stronghold, read or paraphrase the following text:

> You appear on the rooftop of a fortress surrounded by a drab city built atop a great stony husk. The argent phlogiston of the Astral Plane fills the sky. In a courtyard at the base of the fortress, scores of githyanki soldiers march in perfect formation, barking vile epithets about their enemies.
>
> Roof guards lead you down into the bowels of the stronghold, to a circular chamber with a vaulted ceiling and tile mosaic on the floor depicting a massive, fearsome red dragon. War banners hang on the gray slate walls. In the middle of the room stand two figures: a githyanki warrior clad in black armor with a black gem embedded in his right eye socket and a black raven perched on his right shoulder, and a githyanki wizard dressed in vermilion robes adorned with black symbols.

Zetch'r'r's stronghold contains hundreds of githyanki loyal to Zetch'r'r, plus one or two spies working for other githyanki factions in the city. The warlord and his advisor, "Vrax," are conferring when the PCs arrive.

Creatures (EL 25+): Despite being a ruthless blackguard, Zetch'r'r is an honorable and lawful githyanki devoted to the ancient teachings of Gith. His plans of conquest are secondary to his hatred of illithids and his desire to reunite the children of Gith as a single people. If the heroes are githyanki, he offers them a stronghold or positions of influence within his great faction. If the heroes belong to other races, he vows to leave the PCs' world in peace if they are willing to risk their lives for the glory of his people. Convincing the other warlords to abandon their conquest of the PCs' world will take some time and effort on his part, and Zetch'r'r believes he stands a better chance of persuading the other faction leaders once Vlaakith is destroyed.

Vraxanault, a very old red dragon *polymorphed* into the form of a githyanki warlock, serves as the warlord's steed and military advisor.

Zetch'r'r, Male Githyanki Ftr10/Blk5: CR 17; Medium Humanoid (extraplanar); HD 15d10+30; hp 137; Init +1; Spd 20 ft. (30 ft. base); AC 28, touch 15, flat-footed 27; BAB +15/+10/+5; Grap +18; Atk +22 melee (2d6+9/17–20, *+3 silver sword*) or +21 melee (1d6+6/19–20 plus poison, *+3 short sword*) or +16 ranged; Full Atk +22/+17/+12 melee (2d6+9/17–20, *+3 silver sword*) or +21/+16/+11 melee (1d6+6/19–20 plus poison, *+3 short sword*) or +16/+11/+6 ranged; SA aura of despair, command undead, *eye of fear*, poison use, psionics, smite good 2/day, sneak attack +1d6, spells; SQ aura of evil, darkvision 60 ft., dark blessing, *detect good*, fiendish servant, psionics; SR 20; AL LE; SV Fort +17, Ref +9, Will +10; Str 17, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 18.

Skills: Concentration +10, Diplomacy +14, Hide +2, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (religion) +3, Knowledge (the planes) +4, Ride +9. *Feats:* Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*silver sword*), Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Sunder, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Ride-By Attack, Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

***Eye of Fear* (Sp):** Three times per day, Zetch'r'r can use his black eye-gem to cast a quickened *fear* spell (Will save DC 21 negates).

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 14), *dimension door, mage hand, telekinesis* (DC 19); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 21). Caster level 15th; save DC 14 + spell level.

Smite Good (Su): Twice per day, Zetch'r'r can make a smite attack with a +4 bonus and deal +5 points of additional damage against a good foe.

Blackguard Spells Prepared (2/2; base save DC = 12 + spell level): 1st—*cure light wounds, doom*; 2nd—*cure moderate wounds, death knell.*

Possessions: +5 full plate, +3 silver sword (treat as greatsword), *+3 short sword* coated with dragon bile (Fortitude save DC 26 resists; 3d6 Str/0 and see "Astral Plane Effects" sidebar), *eye of fear, ring of protection +4, ring of shooting stars, cloak of resistance +4, potion of bull's strength, potion of bear's endurance.*

Eyebite, Raven Fiendish Servant: CR —; Tiny Animal; HD 4d8; hp 18; Init +2; Spd 10 ft., fly 40 ft. (average); AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 15; BAB +3; Grap –10; Atk +7 melee (1d2–4, claws); Full Atk +7 melee (1d2–4, claws); Space/Reach 2 1/2

ft./0 ft.; SA share spells; SQ empathic link, improved evasion, low-light vision, speak with blackguard; AL LE; SV Fort +15, Ref +10, Will +10; Str 3, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 7, Wis 14, Cha 6.

Skills: Listen +3, Spot +5.

Feats: Weapon Finesse.

Vraxanault, Male Very Old Red Dragon: hp 465; *Monster Manual* 75. (Vraxanault's statistics aren't provided here, since the PCs shouldn't, in theory, need to fight him.)

Development: The PCs might have philosophical issues concerning an alliance with Zetch'r'r, given his alignment. They might decide to oppose the lich-queen on their own, without the warlord's support. If negotiations with Zetch'r'r fall apart, Vlaakith's spies may learn of this clandestine meeting and try to eliminate both the PCs and the warlord before they have a chance to resolve their differences.

If the PCs and Zetch'r'r come to an agreement, Zetch'r'r allows them plenty of time to prepare for their assault on the lich-queen's palace. He does not volunteer any of his men, however, fearing that Vlaakith or Xam'kras might somehow trace them back to their commanding officer. Zetch'r'r knows all of the information contained in the "Background," except for the material in "The One in the Void" section. He also knows the following information about the lich-queen and her palace:

• Vlaakith carries the *scepter of Ephelomon*, a gift given to the ruling line by Tiamat's red dragon consort and a symbol of the alliance between the githyanki and red dragons.

- Vlaakith rules from a throne made of illithid skeletons.
- Vlaakith is somehow responsible for the earthquakes plaguing Tu'narath.
- The Ch'r'ai bring githyanki eggs to the palace so that Vlaakith can corrupt them with a spell that makes them hatch as duthka'gith.
- The leader of the Ch'r'ai (Xam'kras) dwells in the palace, along with several of his closest subordinates and numerous duthka'gith knights. Xam'kras is a githyanki warlock born without legs.
- Susurrus echoes with the whispers of the dead, which can shatter the resolve of even the most battle-hardened githyanki knight.
- One can enter the palace's reception chamber by standing on a symbol at the base of the Statue of Gith and uttering Gith's name. Vlaakith's throne room is located near the reception chamber.
- *Teleporting* into and out of Susurrus is possible, but the lich-queen can sense when living beings enter and depart her palace.
- To insure the lich-queen's demise, one must also destroy her phylactery, which is hidden in the palace library. (This information is only partially true. Vlaakith keeps a fake phylactery in her library; the real one is protected by a *sequester* spell and sealed in a hidden sarcophagus.)

THE PALACE OF WHISPERS

Vlaakith the lich-queen dwells in Susurrus, the Palace of Whispers. Its polished obsidian walls are supported by flying buttresses and carved with narrow windows set with opaque panes of crimson glass. Entrance is gained through the 100-foot-tall statue of Gith that "guards" the palace and watches over the city below (see area 1 for details). A vast necropolis surrounds the palace on all sides, the graves and mausoleums of fallen githyanki heroes eerily silent. As one nears Susurrus, the whispers of the dead trapped within its walls can be heard. These whispers become louder as one enters the forlorn edifice, and even more intense in the presence of Vlaakith.

WHISPERS OF THE DAMNED

Ominous whispers issue from the walls, floors, and ceilings of Susurrus. These whispers are the last vestiges of creatures slain by the lich-queen, and though they exist to torment her, they have even greater effect on the living. Living creatures that enter the Palace of Whispers must succeed at a Will save (DC 20) or be shaken (–2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks) by the whispers for as long as they remain in the palace, and for an additional 2d6 rounds thereafter. A new save must be made each time a creature enters Susurrus.

The whispers are always louder in Vlaakith's presence. Any creature in the same room or corridor as the lich-queen must succeed at a Will save (DC 20) or be frightened (as shaken, except the creature must flee if possible) for as long as it remains in the area.

When a living creature perishes in Susurrus, its soul is trapped in the palace. Thousands of creatures have died in Susurrus, and their overlapping whispers create a dull cacophony through which no single voice can be ascertained. Occasionally, one might hear a singular whisper pleading for freedom and release, but nothing else intelligible can be gleaned from listening to these whispers of the damned. Releasing a trapped soul requires a *raise dead*, *resurrection*, *true resurrection*, *miracle*, or *wish* spell. The spell must be cast inside the Palace of Whispers to work, and in the case of a *raise dead* or *resurrection*

ASTRAL PLANE EFFECTS

The Astral Plane has the following relevant effects:

Timeless: Age, hunger, thirst, poison, and natural healing don't function, though they resume functioning when the traveler leaves the Astral Plane. Psychic poisons (introduced in the *Book of Vile Darkness*) function normally in the Astral Plane.

Magic: All spells and spell-like abilities used within the Astral Plane may be employed as if they were improved by the Quicken Spell feat. Already quickened spells and spell-like abilities are unaffected, as are spells from magic items. Spells so quickened are still prepared and cast at their unmodified level. As with the Quicken Spell feat, only one quickened spell may be cast per round.

spell, the body of the slain creature (or a portion thereof) must also reside in the palace. In short, if a creature is killed in Susurrus, the only place it can be brought back to life is inside the palace.

POWER OF THE MIND

Gravity functions normally in Susurrus: Creatures walk on the floor, and items fall to the floor when dropped. However, intelligent creatures can use the power of their minds to travel within the palace more easily. The ability functions just like the *fly* spell except that activating the ability is a free action, the flight cannot be dispelled, and a creature's fly speed equals 10 feet per point of Intelligence (perfect maneuverability). Mindless creatures cannot fly without the aid of magic.

Using the power of one's mind to fly isn't something the PCs are aware of upon arrival. They must discover this ability on their own. If they specifically ask if they know or have heard anything about the palace, allow them a bardic knowledge check (DC 35) or Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 40) to see whether they know of this unique trait.

GITHYANKI *SYMBOLS*

The githyanki use a written language composed of alphabetic letters arranged in circular signs called *tir'su*. Each tir'su sign represents a single word, and multiple tir'su can be connected to form phrases and sentences.

Githyanki read tir'su clockwise, starting at the top. (Githzerai use a similar language but read their signs counter-clockwise.) Each "spoke" on the wheel represents a letter of the alphabet.

Vlaakith the lich-queen and many high-level githyanki warlocks use tir'su when creating magic *symbols*. Here are some *symbols* used as traps in the lich-queen's palace:

Draa'zvir ("dragon's breath") (EL 8): Creatures and objects within 60 feet of the *symbol* are caught in a blast of fire that deals 15d6 points of damage. This *symbol* functions only on the Astral Plane.

Draa'zvir Symbol Trap: CR 8; magic device; variable trigger (see text); automatic reset; spell effect (*draa'zvir symbol*, 25th-level wizard, strong evocation, 60-ft. radius, 15d6 fire damage, DC 28 Reflex save for half); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

G'hel'zor ("brainfire") (EL 8): One or more creatures within 60 feet of the *symbol*, whose combined total hit points does not exceed 250, are bombarded by scorching bolts of mental energy. The symbol affects closest creatures first, skipping creatures with too many hit points to affect. Those that fail their Will save suffer the effects of a *feeblemind* spell. This *symbol* is a mind-affecting spell.

G'hel'zor Symbol Trap: CR 8; magic device; variable trigger (see text); automatic reset; spell effect (*g'hel'zor symbol*, 25th-level wizard, strong enchantment, 60-ft. radius, *feeblemind* spell, DC 28 Will save negates); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 32.

Ir'zharn ("recall agony") (EL 6): This *symbol* recalls horrible wounds suffered in the past or portents wounds yet to be received. All creatures within a 60-foot radius take 11d6 points of damage as the past (or future) impinges on the present. This *symbol* is a mind-affecting spell.

Ir'zharn Symbol Trap: CR 6; magic device; variable trigger (see text); automatic reset; spell effect (*ir'zharn symbol*, 25th-level wizard, strong enchantment, 60-ft. radius, 11d6 damage, DC 27 Will save for half); Search DC 31; Disable Device DC 31.

Mirhanac ("crystallize") (EL 9): One or more creatures within 60 feet of the *symbol*, whose combined total hit points do not exceed 150, are turned to solid crystal; the effect is otherwise similar to the *flesh to stone* spell. The *symbol* affects closest creatures first, skipping creatures with too many hit points to affect. A successful Fortitude save slows the victim for 2d6 rounds instead.

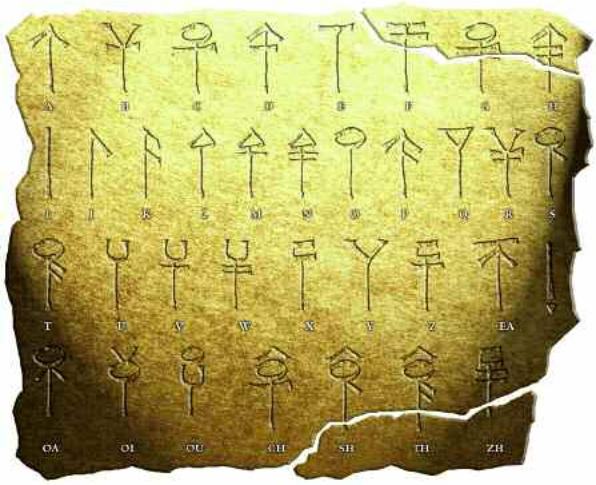
Mirhanac Symbol Trap: CR 9; magic device; variable trigger (see text); automatic reset; spell effect (*mirhanac symbol*, 25th-level wizard, strong transmutation, 60-ft. radius, *flesh to stone* or *slow* spell, DC 29 Fortitude save partial); Search DC 33; Disable Device DC 33.

Rzydu'un ("ectoplasmic blast") (EL 7): Creatures within 60 feet of the *symbol* are engulfed in a white-hot blast of astral ectoplasm that deals 11d6 points of damage. In addition, creatures are overwhelmed by raw emotions that cripple them mentally, leaving them shaken (–2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks) for 4d6 rounds. A successful Will save halves the damage and negates the shaken effect. This *symbol* is treated as a mind-affecting spell and functions only on the Astral Plane.

Rzydu'un Symbol Trap: CR 7; magic device; variable trigger (see text); automatic reset; spell effect (*rzydu'un symbol*, 25th-level wizard, strong enchantment, 60-ft. radius, 11d6 damage plus shaken for 4d6 rounds, DC 27 Will save half and negates shaken effect); Search DC 31; Disable Device DC 31.

T'rac ("insanity") (EL 9): All creatures within 60 feet of the *symbol* become permanently insane (as the *insanity* spell).

T'rac Symbol Trap: CR 9; magic device; variable trigger (see text); automatic reset; spell effect (*t'rac symbol*, 25th-level



The Gith Alphabet

wizard, strong enchantment, 60-ft. radius, *insanity* spell, DC 29 Will save negates); Search DC 33; Disable Device DC 33.

***Vlaakith* ("death") (EL 9):** This *symbol* slays one or more creatures within 60 feet whose combined total hit points do not exceed 150. The *symbol* affects the closest creature first, skipping creatures with too many hit points to affect.

***Vlaakith Symbol* Trap:** CR 9; magic device; variable trigger (see text); automatic reset; spell effect (*Vlaakith symbol*, 25th-level wizard, strong necromancy, 60-ft. radius, *symbol of death* spell, DC 29 Fortitude save negates); Search DC 33; Disable Device DC 33.

PALACE FEATURES

The entire palace radiates strong Abjuration, Transmutation, and Necromancy magic whenever a *detect magic* spell is cast. Other recurring features within the palace are described below.

Unhallowed Halls: The entire palace radiates an effect similar to the *unhallow* spell that prevents good summoned or conjured creatures from entering. Moreover, evil creatures within the palace gain a +2 deflection bonus to AC and a +2 resistance bonus on saves against attacks made (or effects created by) good creatures.

All turning checks made to turn undead within Susurrus take a –4 penalty, and turning checks to rebuke undead gain a +4 profane bonus. Spell resistance does not apply to this effect.

Lastly, the *unhallow* effect also dispels all invisibility effects, as per the *invisibility purge* spell.

Walls, Ceilings, and Floors: The obsidian surfaces of the palace (walls, floors, and ceilings) regenerate 10 points of damage per round, such that any hole made in the structure is soon repaired. Any creature that passes through a wall, floor, or ceiling using *ethereal jaunt*, *passwall*, or similar spells is exposed to the cries of tormented souls trapped within the palace and must succeed at a Will save (DC 28) or succumb to an *insanity* spell. This effect cannot be dispelled.

Ceilings inside the palace are 50 feet high unless otherwise noted.

Obsidian Walls, Floors, and Ceilings: 2 ft. thick; Hardness 10; hp 200 (per 10-foot section); regeneration 10; break DC 48; Climb DC 20.

Windows: The palace's opaque, crimson-colored glass windows measure 4 feet across and 17 feet tall. They are as strong as iron, making them difficult to break. In addition, Vlaakith has inscribed a *rzydu'un symbol* on each window, set to activate if it is shattered or a creature attempts to pass through it using magic.

Fortified Windows: 1 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 30; break DC 28.

***Rzydu'un Symbol* Trap:** See the Githyanki *Symbols* section for details.

Doors: Susurrus contains five different types of doors: ectoplasmic doors, gray mist doors, zombified doors, and secret doors. Each type of door is described below.

Ectoplasmic Doors (EL 4): These doors are indicated with an "E" on the map. An ectoplasmic door looks like a 7-foot-wide, 10-foot-tall oval portal filled with a translucent mass of rippling ectoplasm reinforced with writhing energy strands. Each ectoplasmic door sheds light in a 5-foot radius and provides shadowy illumination out to 10 feet. An ectoplasmic door has limited psionic awareness such that it can be willed open or closed, as a free action, by any creature with psionic ability that stands within 5 feet of the door. Creatures vying for control of the door make opposed Intelligence checks to determine who controls the door. An ectoplasmic door cannot be opened with a *knock* spell.

Any attack made against the door causes a strand of ectoplasm to lash forth and strike the attacker. The strand has a maximum range of 40 feet; treat it as a ranged touch attack that duplicates the effects of a *touch of idiocy* spell. An ectoplasmic door that is destroyed reforms in 1d4 minutes. Ectoplasmic doors are soundproof.

Ectoplasmic Door: 2 in. thick; hp 90; damage reduction 10/magic; break DC 25.

Gray Mist Door (EL 6): These doors are indicated with a "G" on the map. A gray mist door looks like a 7-foot-wide, 10-foot-tall oval portal filled with opaque, silvery-gray mist similar in color to the Astral Plane itself. The mist blocks all sound and cannot be dispersed or dispelled. Any living creature that passes through the door suffers horrible wounds as the fabric of time tears apart its will and exposes the creature to grievous injuries suffered in the past. The creature takes 10d6 points of damage, or half damage with a successful Will save (DC 26). This is a mind-affecting attack.

Zombified Doors (EL 4): These doors are indicated with a "Z" on the map. A zombified door looks like a 7-foot-wide, 10-foot-tall oval portal filled with stitched flesh. A zombified door is unaffected by a *knock* spell but peels open when an undead creature comes within 5 feet of it. It can also be forced open or

closed with a *command undead* spell or successful turning check; treat a zombified door as a 16-HD undead creature for turning purposes. The door quickly restitches itself when damaged and has fast healing 10. Zombified doors are soundproof.

Zombified Door: 6 in. thick; hp 180; damage reduction 5/holy, fast healing 10; break DC 28.

Secret Door: Secret doors are indicated with an "S" on the map. These rectangular slabs of obsidian blend neatly with the surrounding stonework and require magic (such as a *detect secret doors* spell) or a successful Search check (DC 30) to locate. Unless noted otherwise, all secret doors are 20 feet off the floor and 20 feet below the ceiling. The secret doors are soundproof and open into rooms; a secret door that connects two rooms opens into the larger room.

Illumination: Rooms in Susurrus are dark unless noted otherwise. Githyanki within the lich-queen's palace carry light sources with them when they navigate the various halls and chambers.

***Scrying* And Detection:** The interior of Susurrus is not specifically warded against *scrying* spells, although the lich-queen always uses *screen* spells to conceal the contents of her throne-room (area 7) and reliquary (area 38). Vlaakith can, however, sense whenever someone uses *scrying* in her palace, and she automatically spots *scrying* sensors in her presence.

As long as she remains in Susurrus, Vlaakith can detect the presence of every living creature in the palace. She can also communicate with and view any creature in the palace as the *clairaudience/clairvoyance* spell. She uses this ability to spy on intruders, coordinate the palace's defenses, and prepare for the arrival of enemies. If she leaves the palace for any reason, including visits to the caves under Susurrus (areas 39–49), the lich-queen can no longer sense the presence of living creatures in the palace.

GROUND FLOOR (AREAS 1–30)

The following encounters are keyed to the ground floor map of Susurrus.

1. GREAT STATUE OF GITH

A 100-foot-tall statue of polished obsidian stands before the lich-queen's dark palace. The statue depicts a female githyanki knight bedecked in ornate armor clutching a gigantic greatsword, its blade fashioned from gleaming silver. The sword's point hovers 10 feet above the ground, directly over a 10-foot-diameter circular symbol carved into the statue's base.

The statue depicts Gith, the legendary liberator of the githyanki (and githzerai) people. Both the statue and the giant sword it clutches are impervious to spells and have damage reduction 20/adamantine.

The symbol carved into the statue's base is a *tir'su*, a githyanki sign that spells the word "Gith." The symbol is a *teleportation circle:* Any creature that stands on the sign and speaks the name "Gith" causes the tir'su to glow with a silver light and *teleport* all creatures atop it to area 2 (inside the palace). Good summoned or conjured creatures are not *teleported*, as they cannot enter the palace due to the continuous *unhallow* effect that operates within the edifice.

2. ARRIVAL POINT

Creatures *teleported* to this room from area 1 appear in the middle of the floor.

This 30-foot-square, 50-foot-high room holds no furnishings. Five oval portals glow in the darkness. Each portal is filled with a translucent, rippling barrier of ectoplasm coated in writhing strands of ectoplasmic mucous. Horrible whispers call out to you from the walls, floor, and ceiling, but you can't discern what they're saying.

Characters with *true seeing* pierce the *illusory wall* that conceals a secret door in the middle of one wall. The ectoplasmic and secret doors are described under "Doors," above.

If the PCs *teleport* to this chamber from area 1, Vlaakith senses their arrival and begins observing them with the *clairaudience/clairvoyance* ability granted by the palace. See the "Vlaakith the Lich-Queen" section for more information on her tactics.

Development: As the PCs make their way through Susurrus, continually reinforce the ominous and everpresent whisperings of the souls trapped within the palace.

3. DUTHKA'GITH QUARTERS (EL 18)

Intense heat fills this chamber. The obsidian walls are adorned with blood-red murals depicting red dragons of all sizes soaring above the fires of Hell. Growing out of a black crystalline "shrub" in the middle of the floor are two 8-foot-tall, 5-foot-wide eggs of mirrorlike silvery matter wreathed in strands of energy.

Any living creature that sets foot in the room takes 2d6 points of fire damage per round from the ambient heat.

The "eggs" are *rejuvenation pods*—magic devices that transform ambient astral energy into healing power. Although natural healing does not normally occur on the Astral Plane, any living creature that sleeps inside a *rejuvenation pod* for 8 hours gains twice its character level or Hit Dice in hit points.

Each *rejuvenation pod* has hardness 8 and 80 hit points. Careful inspection of each pod reveals a vertical seam. When a creature traces its finger along the pod's seam, the *rejuvenation* pod splits open, revealing a coffin-size compartment filled with silvery light. Any creature inside a pod can open or close the pod by mental command as a free action.

Creatures: Resting in the *rejuvenation pods* are two male duthka'giths (githyanki half-red dragon) fighters named Nzashur and Szagurel. If either pod is disturbed, they emerge and attack. Otherwise, they remain at rest until awakened by

Captain Zr'kiil (area 5) or Xam'kras (area 10). For more information on the duthka'gith, see the "Knights of the Lich-Queen" Mini-Game on the flip side of this issue.

Nzashur and Szagurel, Male Githyanki Duthka'gith Ftr12: CR 16; Medium Dragon (augmented humanoid, fire); HD 12d12+24; hp 117, 108; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., fly 110 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 25, touch 12, flat-footed 24; BAB +12/+7/+2; Grap +17; Atk +21 melee (2d6+12/17–20, +3 *silver sword*) or +17 melee (1d6+5, bite) or +14 ranged (1d8+6/×3, +1 *composite longbow* [+5 Str]); Full Atk +21/+16/+11 melee (2d6+12/17–20, +3 *silver sword*) and +15 melee (1d6+2, bite); or +17 melee (1d4+5, 2 claws) and +15 melee (1d6+2, bite); or +14/+9/+4 ranged (1d8+6/×3, +1 *composite longbow* [+5 Str]); SA breath weapon (6d8 cone of fire; Reflex DC 12 half), psionics, smite good 1/day (+12 damage); SQ darkvision 60 ft., cold resistance 5, fire immunity, psionics; SR 17; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 21, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 12.

Skills: Craft (armorsmithing) +4, Craft (weaponsmithing) +4, Jump +10, Listen +5, Ride +8, Search +4, Spot +6. *Feats:* Alertness, Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*silver sword*), Improved Critical (greatsword), Mounted Combat, Multiattack, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Ride-By Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 11), *dimension door, mage hand, telekinesis* (DC 16); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 18). Caster level 12th; save DC 11 + spell level.

Possessions: +4 breastplate, +3 silver sword, +1 mighty composite longbow [+5 Str] with 30 arrows, *ring of protection +1, cloak of resistance +1, 2 potions of bear's endurance,* pouch containing 150 pp.

4. DUTHKA'GITH QUARTERS (EL 18)

Intense heat fills this chamber. The obsidian walls are adorned with blood-red murals depicting hundreds of eggs floating in a sea of fire. Many of the eggs have cracked open, releasing small dragons composed of living flame. Growing out of a black crystalline "shrub" in the middle of the floor are two 8-foot-tall, 5-foot-wide eggs composed of a silvery, mirrorlike substance wreathed in strands of energy.

This room is similar to area 3.

Creatures: Resting in this chamber's *rejuvenation pods* are two female duthka'gith fighters named Fzariyel and Zyaan. If either pod is disturbed, they emerge and attack. Otherwise, they remain at rest until awakened by Captain Zr'kiil (area 5) or Xam'kras (area 10).

Fzariyel and Zyaan, Female Githyanki Duthka'gith Ftr12: hp 118, 105; see area 3 for complete statistics.

5. ZR'KIIL'S QUARTERS (EL VARIES)

This chamber is unbearably hot. Carved into the obsidian walls are shelves lined with hundreds of bleached-white skulls. Growing out of a black crystalline "shrub" in the large, windowed alcove is an 8-foot-tall, 5-foot-wide egg of reflective, mirrorlike matter cracked open along a smooth, vertical seam. Silvery rays of light pour out of the opened egg, illuminating the chamber. Piled around the egg are thousands of coins and hundreds of gemstones.

In the middle of the room lies a smoldering humanoid corpse, its ankles shackled to iron rings bolted to the floor.

Any living creature that sets foot in the room takes 2d6 points of fire damage per round from the ambient heat.

Hundreds of skulls belonging to dead githzerai adorn the walls. The red crystal egg is a *rejuvenation pod* similar to the ones found in area 3. The **Treasure** surrounding the pod belongs to a red dragon that lairs here. Its master, a duthka'gith wizard named Zr'kiil, also resides here (see **Creatures** for details).

Creatures (EL 22): Captain Zr'kiil answers only to Vlaakith. He commands all of the duthka'gith based in Susurrus but spends most of his time inspecting the hatcheries (areas 50–56) and training his duthka'gith soldiers. Presently, he has just concluded his interrogation of a githzerai spy who gained access to the palace. All that remains of the githzerai is his scorched skeletal remains and some blistered bits of flesh.

Zr'kiil has a juvenile red dragon mount that lurks on the ceiling above the chamber's entrance. PCs spot the dragon immediately if they think to look up after entering the room.

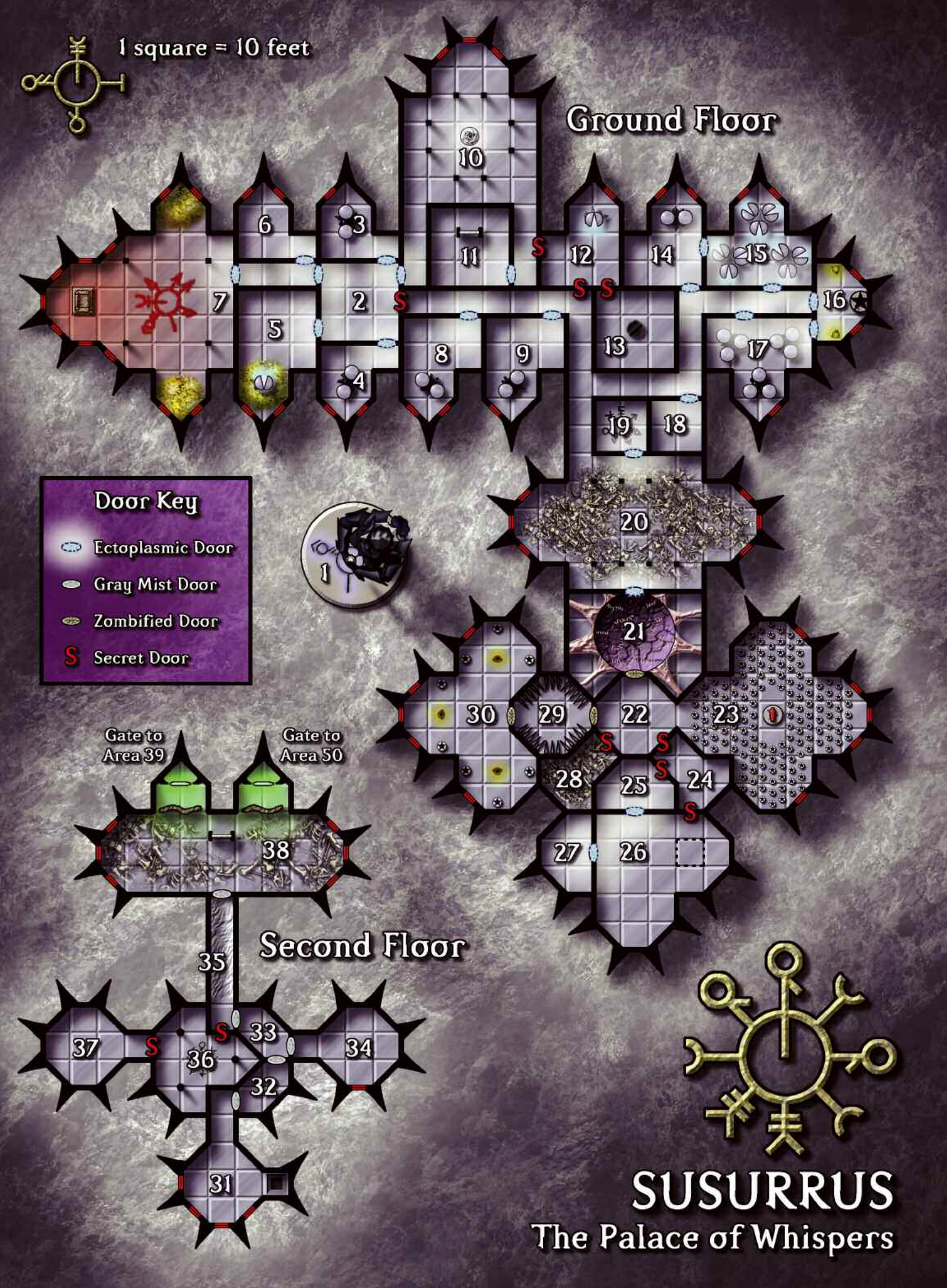
Captain Zr'kiil, Male Githyanki Duthka'gith Wiz14: CR 18; Medium Dragon (fire); HD 14d6+28; hp 97; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 190 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 22, touch 14, flat-footed 20; BAB +7/+2; Grap +10; Atk +10 melee (1d6+3, bite); Full Atk 2 claws +10 melee (1d4+3) and bite +5 melee (1d6+1); SA breath weapon (6d8 cone of fire; Reflex DC 12 half), spells, psionics, smite good (+14 damage); SQ darkvision 60 ft., cold resistance 5, fire immunity, psionics; SR 19; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +13; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 19, Wis 12, Cha 14.

Skills: Concentration +19, Craft (alchemy) +13, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (the planes) +14, Listen +6, Ride +5, Spellcraft +23, Spot +6. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Greater Spell Focus (Evocation), Maximize Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Enchantment), Spell Focus (Evocation), Spell Penetration.

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 12), *dimension door, mage hand, telekinesis* (DC 17); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 19). Caster level 14th; save DC 12 + spell level.

Wizard Spells Prepared (4/5/5/5/5/3/3/2; base save DC = 14 + spell level): 0—*acid splash, detect magic, open/close, read magic;* 1st—*identify, magic missile* ×2, *ray of enfeeblement, shield;* 2nd—*bear's endurance, cat's grace, detect thoughts, resist energy, scorching ray;* 3rd—*displacement, haste, hold person**, *lightning bolt*†, *slow**; 4th—*dimensional anchor, fire shield,* maximized *magic missile, wall of fire*†, *stoneskin;* 5th—*cone of cold*†, *dominate person**, *mind fog**; 6th—*chain lightning*†, *greater dispel magic, repulsion;* 7th—*banishment, greater scrying.*

*Enchantment spell. The base save DC for these spells is 15 + spell level.


1 square = 10 feet
Ground Floor
Door Key
Ectoplasmic Door
Gray Mist Door
Zombified Door
S Secret Door
Gate to Area 39
Gate to Area 50
Second Floor
SUSURRUS
The Palace of Whispers

†Evocation spell. The base save DC for these spells is 16 + spell level.

Possessions: Bracers of armor +4, ring of protection +2, ring of mind shielding, gloves of Dexterity +2, cloak of resistance +3, headband of intellect +2, wand of fireball (caster level 10th; 26 charges), *pearl of power* (3rd), scroll of maximized *lightning bolt* (caster level 10th), scroll of *greater dispel magic* (caster level 13th), pouch containing 25 pp and a 100-gp pearl (material component for *identify* spell), spellbook (contains all prepared spells plus 2d12 additional spells of 1st through 7th level).

Holocaust, Male Juvenile Red Dragon: CR 10; Large Dragon (fire); HD 16d12+64; hp 192; Init +0; Spd 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor), fly 140 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 24, touch 9, flat-footed 24; BAB +16; Grap +29; Atk +25 melee (2d6+9, bite); Full Atk +25 melee (2d6+9, bite) and +20 melee (1d8+4, 2 claws) and +19 melee (1d6+4, 2 wings) and +19 melee (1d8+13, tail slap); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft. (10 ft. with bite); SA breath weapon, spells; SQ blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 400 ft., fire subtype, immune to sleep and paralysis, keen senses, *locate object* 4/day (as 4th-level sorcerer); AL CE; SV Fort +14, Ref +10, Will +12; AL CE; Str 29, Dex 10, Con 19, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Skills: Climb +28, Concentration +23, Diplomacy +4, Escape Artist +19, Intimidate +21, Listen +23, Search +21, Sense Motive +21, Spot +23. *Feats:* Alertness, Flyby Attack, Power Attack, Snatch, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (claw).

Breath Weapon (Su): 40-ft. cone-shaped burst every 1d4 rounds; 8d10 points of fire damage; Reflex save (DC 22) for half.

Fire Subtype (Ex): Immune to fire. The dragon takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from cold, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, or if the save is a success or failure.

Spells Known (6/6; base save DC = 12 + spell level): 0—*daze, detect magic, ghost sound, open/close, read magic;* 1st—*expeditious retreat, mage armor, obscuring mist.*

Tactics: Zr'kiil casts the following spells before entering combat, in the following order: *repulsion, displacement, haste, resist energy* (cold), *stoneskin, bear's endurance, fire shield* (warm shield version), and *cat's grace.* During the first round of battle, he casts *dimensional anchor* on an enemy spellcaster, followed by *banishment* on opponents with poor Will saves. On the second round, he targets a fighter-type enemy with *mind fog,* followed by *dominate person.* If no fighter types remain, Zr'kiil casts *greater dispel magic* and *slow* on an enemy spellcaster (the *slow* spell effectively counters the Astral Plane's quickening effect on spellcasting). In subsequent rounds, he uses damaging spells such as *cone of cold, chain lightning,* and maximized *magic missile.*

Holocaust helps Zr'kiil any way it can and isn't afraid to catch the duthka'gith in its cone of fire.

Treasure: Piled around Zr'kiil's rejuvenation pod are 135,000 cp, 42,500 sp, 6,200 gp, 850 pp, 250 10-gp gems, 81 50-gp gems, 35 100-gp gems, and 12 500-gp gems. One of the 500-gp gems radiates strong magic because it has a *symbol* spell cast on it (see **Trap** below).

Trap (EL 8): One of the gems in the dragon's hoard bears a *draa'zvir symbol.* The *symbol* activates when a creature picks up the gem and looks at the symbol.

***Draa'zvir Symbol* Trap:** See the "Githyanki *Symbols*" section for details.

Development: If an alarm is raised, Captain Zr'kiil and Holocaust leave the room. While Zr'kiil awakens the duthka'giths in areas **3** and **4**, Holocaust marshals the duthka'gith forces in area **20**.

6. DOOMED GITHYANKI (EL 16)

This room is dark and featureless, save for the ever-present whispers emanating from the walls, floor, and ceiling. A lone **Creature** stands in the middle of the room, shrouded in the darkness.

Creature: A 16th-level githyanki fighter named Gr'a'kryt awaits an audience with the lich-queen. He expects to endure the ultimate test of loyalty and hopes Vlaakith will grant him great power and immortality once he proves his worth. Vlaakith intends to grant his wish, of course, once she's drained the life force from his body. The palace's incessant whispers have left the knight shaken (see "Whispers of the Damned" for details).

Gr'a'kryt, Male Githyanki Ftr16: CR 18; Medium Humanoid (extraplanar); HD 16d10+16; hp 111; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., fly 110 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 22, touch 13, flat-footed 21; BAB +16/+11/+6/+1; Grap +19; Atk +22 melee (2d6+8/17–20, *+2 silver sword*) or +19 ranged (1d8+4/×3 plus 1d6 fire, *+1 flaming composite longbow* [+3 Str]); Full Atk +22/+17/+12/+7 melee (2d6+8/17–20, *+2 silver sword*) or +19/+14/+9/+4 ranged (1d8+4/×3 plus 1d6 fire, *+1 flaming composite longbow* [+3 Str]) or +17/+17/+12/+7/+2 ranged (1d8+4/×3 plus 1d6 fire, *+1 flaming composite longbow* [+3 Str] with Rapid Shot); SA psionics; SQ darkvision 60 ft., psionics; SR 21; AL LE; SV Fort +13, Ref +8, Will +7; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 13.

Skills: Craft (armorsmithing) +4, Craft (weaponsmithing) +5, Jump +11, Listen +4, Ride +8, Search +3, Spot +4. *Feats:* Alertness, Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*silver sword*), Great Cleave, Improved Critical (greatsword), Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise

ASTRAL DRIFTMETAL

This extraordinarily rare mineral is mined only on Tu'narath and other islands of matter floating on the Astral Plane. It is very similar to iron but has a single remarkable feature: It has a 25% chance of being effective against an incorporeal attack, as if it were made of force. It is not malleable enough to be worked into chainmail or scale mail; only a breastplate, shield, or any form of heavy armor can be made from Astral driftmetal.

A suit of driftmetal armor weighs 5 pounds more than the same armor made of steel, but the other statistics of the armor (maximum Dexterity bonus, armor check penalty, spell failure chance) are unchanged.

Astral driftmetal has a hardness of 12 and 30 hit points per inch of thickness. Its market price modifier is +1,000 gp.

Shot, Rapid Shot, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur*, *daze* (DC 11), *dimension door*, *mage hand*, *telekinesis* (DC 16); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 18). Caster level 16th; save DC 11 + spell level.

Possessions: +2 *driftmetal breastplate* (see the Astral Driftmetal sidebar for details), +2 *silver sword*, +2 *flaming composite longbow* [+3 Str] with 50 arrows, *amulet of natural armor* +2, *ring of protection* +2, *boots of speed*, *cloak of resistance* +2.

Tactics: Gr'a'kryt is resigned to his fate and will not betray the lich-queen unless he is magically compelled to do so. If the PCs try to persuade him to abandon in faith in Vlaakith, he curses and attacks them. He uses his *dimension door* ability to slip in and out of combat quickly.

7. VLAAKITH'S THRONE ROOM (EL VARIES)

This chamber has a *screen* spell cast upon it. The *screen* spell hides the bloody symbol on the chamber floor, the treasure piles in the windowed alcoves, and all the room's occupants. Modify the following read-aloud text as needed:

> The maddening whispers intensify within this dark chamber. Four obsidian pillars support the 50-foot-high vaulted ceiling. Four desiccated corpses hang from each pillar by iron shackles, and carved into each of their foreheads is a small circular symbol. The same symbol, only much larger, is painted in blood on the floor between the pillars.
>
> Great piles of coins fill a pair of opposite-facing, windowed alcoves. Perched atop each pile is a wingless dragon with glistening red scales. Black smoke issues from between the dragon's scales, and the room is filled with the stench of brimstone.
>
> At the far end of the hall rests a throne. The steps leading up to the throne, as well as the seat and arms of the throne, are composed of mind flayer skulls. The back of the throne is made of purplish illithid skin stretched over large rib bones. Hellish light emanating from within the throne casts sordid, skull-shaped shadows on the nearby walls and ceiling.

Here is where Vlaakith holds court. Githyanki knights and warlocks who reach 16th level are brought here to die and be transformed into undead thralls of the lich-queen. Vlaakith also meets dignitaries here, feeding those who displease her to her fiendish dragon pets.

The symbol painted in blood on the floor is a githyanki tir'su that spells the name "Vlaakith" (see **Trap** below). The suspended corpses are all that remains of slain githzerai spies and assassins, and they have similar symbols carved into their foreheads, but these symbols are nonmagical and purely ornamental.

† Vlaakith's Throne of Bones: The throne of bones is horridly illuminated by red *continual flame* spells cast within it. A creature seated on the throne can use the following spell-like abilities, although no ability can be used more than once per day: *circle of death* (centered on the throne), *crushing despair*, *geas/quest*, *power word kill*, *mass suggestion*, *mind fog*, and *scare*. Caster level 25th; save DC 14 + spell level. The throne has hardness 5 and 600 hit points.

The piles of coins in the windowed alcoves are discussed further under **Treasure**.

Creatures (EL 28+): When the PCs enter the palace, Vlaakith is standing 10 feet in front of her throne, preparing to pass judgment on the githyanki in area **6**. Flanking her are two kr'y'izoths and two tl'a'ikiths. Two fiendish red dragons named Eliskyndra and Sarranafel watch the room from their windowed alcoves. Although the dragons have no wings, they can glide through the air using the power of their minds.

The whispers intensify the nearer one gets to the lich-queen. See the "Whispers of the Damned" section for details.

Vlaakith: hp 180; see the "Vlaakith the Lich-Queen" section for statistics, possessions, and tactics.

Kr'y'izoths (2): hp 104 each; use the sample Kr'y'izoth statistics at the end of the adventure (described under the Kr'y'izoth template).

Tl'a'ikiths (2): hp 104 each; use the sample Tl'a'ikith statistics at the end of the adventure (described under the Tl'a'ikith template).

Eliskyndra and Sarranafel, Female Adult Fiendish Red Dragon: CR 16; Huge Dragon (extraplanar, fire); HD 22d12+110; hp 258, 244; Init +0; Spd 40 ft., fly 160 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 29, touch 8, flat-footed 29; BAB +22; Grap +41; Atk +32 melee (2d8+16, bite); Full Atk +32 melee (2d8+11, bite) and +30 melee (2d6+5, 2 claws) and +29 melee (2d6+16, tail slap); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA breath weapon, crush 2d8+16, frightful presence, smite good; SQ blindsense 60 ft., damage reduction 10/magic, darkvision 600 ft., cold resistance 10, fire subtype, immune to *sleep* and paralysis, keen senses, *locate object* 6/day (as 7th-level sorcerer); SR 25; AL CE; SV Fort +18, Ref +13, Will +17; Str 33, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 16, Wis 19, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +28, Concentration +30, Diplomacy +32, Intimidate +30, Jump +36, Listen +31, Search +28, Sense Motive +29, Spot +31. *Feats:* Ability Focus (breath weapon), Alertness, Cleave, Improved Overrun, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (claw).

Breath Weapon (Su): 50-ft. cone-shaped burst every 1d4 rounds; 12d10 points of fire damage; Reflex DC 27 for half.

Crush (Ex): The dragon can, if it is flying or jumping, land on opponents as a standard action, using its whole body to crush them. Crush attacks are effective only against opponents three or more size categories smaller than the dragon (though it can attempt normal overrun or grapple attacks against larger opponents). A crush attack affects as many creatures as can fit under the dragon's body, as determined by the dragon's space. Creatures in the affected area must succeed at a Reflex save (DC 25) or be pinned, automatically taking bludgeoning damage during the next round unless the dragon moves off them. If the dragon chooses to maintain the pin, treat it as a normal grapple attack. Pinned opponents take crush damage each round if they don't escape.

Fire Subtype (Ex): Immune to fire. The dragon takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from cold, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, or if the save is a success or failure.

Frightful Presence (Ex): This ability comes into play whenever the dragon attacks, charges, or flies overhead. Non-dragons with fewer Hit Dice than the dragon, that can see the dragon, and that are within 180 feet of the dragon must succeed at a Will save (DC 24) or succumb to the effects of the dragon's frightful presence. On a failure, creatures with 4 or fewer H it Dice become panicked for 4d6 rounds and those with 5 or more Hit Dice are shaken for 4d6 rounds.

Smite Good (Su): Once per day, a fiendish dragon can make a normal attack to deal +20 points of additional damage against a good foe.

Spells Known (6/7/7/5; base save DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*arcane mark, daze, detect magic, ghost sound, mage hand, open/close, read magic;* 1st—*comprehend languages, expeditious retreat, obscuring mist, magic missile, shield;* 2nd—*bear's endurance, bull's strength, detect thoughts;* 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance, protection from energy.*

Tactics: The tl'a'ikiths and kr'y'izoths heed Vlaakith's every whim. If the PCs find themselves outmatched and flee, Vlaakith sends her undead minions after them. The dragons remain behind to defend the throne room. If the PCs press the attack, one of the dragons breathes forth a cone of fire while the other leaps onto the *symbol of death* in the middle of the room, triggering it. The dragons then close into melee combat, using their smite good abilities with the first bite. If they have time to prepare spells ahead of time, the dragons take 2 rounds to cast *shield, bear's endurance, bull's strength,* and *protection from energy* (cold) on themselves.

Treasure: Characters searching the dragons' alcoves find 250,000 cp, 154,600 sp, 66,000 gp, 9,000 pp, 500 10-gp gems, 210 50-gp gems, 85 100-gp gems, 29 500-gp gems, six 1,000-gp gems, a suit of +2 *dragonhide plate*, a suit of +2 *leather armor of fire resistance*, a *lion's shield*, an *assassin's dagger*, a +2 *adamantine dwarven waraxe*, a +2 *axiomatic longsword*, a *wand of cure critical wounds* (23 charges), a *circlet of persuasion*, an *elemental gem* (water), and a *helm of teleportation*, and a piece of Astral driftmetal shaped like part of a githyanki tir'su. The driftmetal fragment is Piece #1 of a four-piece key needed to unlock Vlaakith's sarcophagus (see area **49** for details).

Trap (EL 9): The symbol painted on the floor is a *Vlaakith symbol* (identical to a *symbol of death*) that triggers whenever it is touched.

↗ *Vlaakith Symbol* **Trap:** See the "Githyanki *Symbols*" section for details.

Development: If Vlaakith is destroyed, her body turns to dust while her spirit is instantaneously transported to her phylactery in area **58**. Thanks to a carefully phrased *wish* spell, Vlaakith's items (including her crown and scepter) vanish as well, *teleported* into the black sarcophagus that holds her phylactery (see area **49** for details).

8. CH'R'AI QUARTERS (EL 8)

Dozens of obsidian shelves protrude from the walls of this vaulted chamber. Atop each shelf rests a black candle that sheds a flickering blue flame. The room contains several furnishings, including a table with two matching chairs, a bronzewood chest with claw-shaped feet, a tall bronzewood wardrobe, and a small shrine lit with more blue-flamed candles. Sprouting from the floor of a windowed alcove are a pair of 8-foot-tall, 5-foot-wide eggs made of a silvery, mirrorlike substance.

This chamber belongs to Ar'dru and Zr'adi, two members of the Ch'r'ai, but neither githyanki is present (they are with Xam'kras in area **10**). Thirty *coldfire candles* (see "New Magic Items") illuminate the room and cast dancing shadows upon the floor, walls, and ceiling.

The two silvery eggs are *rejuvenation pods* (see area **3** for details).

The shrine is dedicated to the lich-queen and contains an obsidian githyanki skull carved with a nonmagical, blood-red symbol of Vlaakith. The shrine also contains a bronze triptych etched with the following words (in Githyanki): "*The souls of the mighty will usher our queen to her divine throne, whereupon she will take her rightful place above all. The unworthy will mourn for eternity while Those Who Serve crush the infidels in Vlaakith's name.*"

The bronzewood wardrobe contains two gold masks shaped like githyanki skulls (500 gp each) and two black hooded robes stitched with golden thread (250 gp each). The front of each robe is emblazoned with a gold symbol of Vlaakith. The masks and robes are part of a ceremony to celebrate the lich-queen's ascendance to godhood—a ceremony that members of the Ch'r'ai anxiously await to perform.

The bronzewood chest has a lock built into its lid. Smashing the chest (2 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 60; break DC 28) or forcing the lock triggers a **Trap**. The chest contains the **Treasure**.

Trap (EL 8): Inscribed on the inside lid of the chest is a *g'hel'zor symbol* cast by Xam'kras that activates when the chest is opened improperly.

↗ *G'hel'zor Symbol* **Trap:** See the "Githyanki *Symbols*" section for details.

Treasure: The bronzewood chest contains some githyanki body wrappings and garments, 600 gp, 180 pp, a +1 *keen kukri*, a +2 *buckler*, a *potion of greater magic weapon* (+2), a *potion of haste*, and a *potion of heroism*. The chest also contains a secret compartment (Search check DC 25 to locate) that holds a spellbook with bone covers. The spellbook contains all of the spells Ar'dru and Zr'adi have prepared (see area **10**), plus 2d8 additional spells of 1st through 3rd level.

9. CH'R'AI QUARTERS (EL 8)

This chamber is identical to area **8**, except that it belongs to a pair of githyanki named Ll'ir'ath and Yrthyx, and it contains different **Treasure**.

Trap (EL 8): See area **8** for details.

Treasure: The bronzewood chest in this room contains some githyanki body wrappings and garments, 810 gp, 70 pp, a *potion of fox's cunning*, a scroll of *tongues* (caster level 6th), and a masterwork silvered dagger with a black diamond (5,000 gp) set in its pommel. The chest also contains a secret compartment (Search check DC 25 to locate) holding a spellbook with bone covers. The spellbook contains the same spells as the book found in area 8.

10. THE WILLGRINDER (EL 26)

A horrendous grinding noise fills this chamber, occasionally punctuated with tormented croaks. The ceiling rises to a darkened height of 50 feet, but drops to a height of only 30 feet in the middle. This lower area is roughly octagonal and supported by eight obsidian pillars. The middle of this central octagon is filled with a 6-foot-wide cylinder of silver light swirling with tendrils of black energy. The grinding noise comes from the cylinder of light, and the horrible croaks emanate from a large toad-like creature trapped within it.

Eight figures encircle the cylinder. Six are githyanki armed with *silver swords* and standing in silence. The seventh figure is a githyanki with no legs who wears a red cloak and clutches a staff capped with a flickering diamond. The eighth figure—a large spherical creature with multiple eyestalks and encased in armor with four mechanical arms protruding from its underside—floats near the legless githyanki.

The swirling cylinder is called the *Willgrinder*, a magical device the Ch'r'ai use to deprive creatures of their free will and transform them into thralls. Any living creature that touches the cylinder must succeed at a Will save (DC 30) or be pulled inside. Once immersed in the swirling energy of the *Willgrinder*, the creature cannot leave of its own free will, is unable to take any physical or mental actions, and suffers 1 point of Wisdom damage per round as tendrils of black energy slowly devour its mind. When the creature is reduced to 0 Wisdom, it falls into a nightmare-wracked coma. After keeping it in this state for 1 hour, the *Willgrinder* expels the creature. Knocked prone in a square adjacent to the cylinder, the creature regains its lost Wisdom at a rate of 1 point per round, regains consciousness immediately, and obeys the first creature that gives it an order. The effect is identical to a *dominate monster* spell, lasts for 25 days, and cannot be *dispelled* (although a *miracle* or *wish* spell can restore the creature's free will). Vlaakith created the *Willgrinder*, and dispelling it requires a successful *dispel check* (DC 36).

A creature trapped within the *Willgrinder* can be pulled free, but anyone reaching into the cylinder to grab a creature trapped inside is also at risk of being pulled inside and subjected to the *Willgrinder*'s effects. The cylinder can hold as many as 3 Large, 6 Medium, or 12 Small creatures.

The Ch'r'ai are waiting for the *Willgrinder* to expel its latest victim: a gray slaad. The Ch'r'ai captured the slaad and plan to send it back to Limbo to spy on a known githzerai stronghold, with orders to return with information on the stronghold's defenses.

Creatures (EL 26): The seven figures surrounding the *Willgrinder* are members of the Ch'r'ai. Six of them are powerful gish (githyanki with levels of fighter and wizard). Xam'kras, the leader of the Ch'r'ai, floats near one of the northernmost pillars, next to his fiendish beholder bodyguard, Ourydei. Xam'kras was born without legs, but his mobility is unhindered on the Astral Plane. Ourydei wears *eye tyrant armor*, giving it a formidable AC and four sword attacks per round.

The gray slaad confined to the *Willgrinder* isn't a threat to the PCs until it is released (in 1d4 minutes, or as determined by the DM). At that point, the slaad obeys the first creature that gives it an order.

Xam'kras, Master of the Ch'r'ai, Male Githyanki Wiz14: CR 16; Medium Humanoid (extraplanar); HD 14d4+14; hp 56; Init +2; Spd 10 ft. (crippled), fly 190 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 23, touch 14, flat-footed 21; BAB +7/+2; Grap +6; Atk +6 melee (1d3–1 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +9 ranged (damage varies, ranged touch); Full Atk +6/+1 melee (1d3–1 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +9/+4 ranged (damage varies, ranged touch); SA psionics, spells; SQ sonic damage immunity, *psionics*, energy resistance 5 (acid, cold, electricity, and fire), spells; SR 19; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +9; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 19, Wis 10, Cha 14.

Skills: Concentration +18, Craft (alchemy) +10, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (the planes) +10, Listen +3, Ride +4, Spellcraft +22, Spot +3. *Feats:* Brew Potion, Craft Staff, Craft Wondrous Item, Greater Spell Focus (Evocation), Maximize Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Evocation), Spell Penetration.

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 12), *dimension door, mage hand, telekinesis* (DC 17); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 19). Caster level 14th; save DC 12 + spell level.

Wizard Spells Prepared (4/5/5/5/5/3/3/2; base save DC = 14 + spell level): 0—*acid splash, detect magic, read magic, resistance;* 1st—*magic missile* ×2, *ray of enfeeblement, shield, true strike;* 2nd—*bear's endurance, detect thoughts, resist energy, scorching ray* ×2; 3rd—*displacement, haste, hold person, lightning bolt**, *ray of exhaustion;* 4th—*dimensional anchor, enervation, fire shield,* maximized *magic missile, stoneskin;* 5th—*cone of cold**, *hold monster, wall of force;* 6th—*chain lightning**, *flesh to stone, true seeing;* 7th—maximized *lightning bolt**, *prismatic spray**.

*Evocation spell. The base save DC for these spells is 16 + spell level.

Possessions: bracers of armor +6, ring of protection +2, staff of frost (22 charges), *red slaad cloak* (see "New Magic Items"), *gloves of Dexterity +2, headband of intellect +2,* scroll of maximized *magic missile,* scroll of maximized *lightning bolt,* scroll of *greater dispelling* (caster level 14th), iron key (unlocks the *dimensional shackles* in area **18**).

Ourydei, Fiendish Beholder: CR 15; Large Aberration (extraplanar); HD 11d8+44; hp 100; Init +6; Spd 5 ft., fly 20 ft. (good), fly 170 ft. (perfect) in the Astral Plane; AC 38, touch 11, flat-footed 36; BAB +8; Grap +14; Atk +9 ranged touch (special, eye rays) and +6 melee (1d8+4/19–20, *+2 longsword*); Full Atk +9 ranged touch (special, eye rays) and +6 melee (1d8+4/19–20, 4 *+2 longswords*) and +4 melee (2d4+1, bite); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA eye rays, smite good 1/day (+11 damage); SQ all-around vision, antimagic cone, cold and fire resistance 10, damage reduction 5/magic, darkvision 60 ft., flight; SR 16; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +11; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 17, Wis 15, Cha 15.

Skills: Hide +6*, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Listen +10, Search +18, Spot +20, Survival +2 (+4 following tracks). *Feats:* Alertness, Flyby Attack, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will.

*Includes –5 armor check penalty.

Possessions: Eye tyrant armor (see "New Magic Items"), 4 *+2 longswords.*

Ar'dru, Ll'ir'ath, Jr'da'kr, Sziin, Yrthyx, and Zr'adi, Male and Female Githyanki Ftr5/Wiz5/Holocaust Warrior3 (Gish): CR 15; Medium Humanoid (extraplanar); HD 5d10+5 plus 5d4+5 plus 3d8+3; hp 80, 74, 69, 68, 62, 58; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 140 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 19; BAB +10/+5; Grap +12; Atk +14 melee (2d6+6/17–20, *+1 silver sword*) or +12 ranged (1d8+3/×3, *+1 composite longbow* [+2 Str]); Full Atk +14/+9 melee (2d6+6/17–20, *+1 silver sword*) or +12/+7 ranged (1d8+3/×3, *+1 composite longbow* [+2 Str]); SA flaming weapon 1/day, psionics, spells; SQ armored casting, improved combat casting, incinerator, *psionics;* SR 18; AL LE; SV Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +9; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Concentration +15*, Craft (weaponsmithing) +7, Jump +9, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (the planes) +9, Listen +4, Ride +10, Spellcraft +14 Spot +4. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*silver sword*), Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Trip, Mounted Combat, Quick Draw, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Evocation), Still Spell, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

*Includes +4 bonus from Combat Casting.

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 9), *dimension door, mage hand, telekinesis* (DC 14); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 16). Caster level 14th; save DC 9 + spell level.

Wizard Spells Prepared (4/5/5/5; save DC = 13 + spell level; 5% spell failure): 0—*detect magic, ghost sound, read magic, resistance;* 1st—*burning hands, charm person, disguise self, magic missile, true strike;* 2nd—*bull's strength,* still *ray of enfeeblement, scorching ray* ×2, stilled *shield;* 3rd—*fireball* ×2, *rage, ray of exhaustion,* still *scorching ray.*

Possessions: +3 studded leather armor, +1 silver sword, amulet of natural armor +2, ring of protection +1, +1 composite longbow [+2 Str] with 25 arrows, *cloak of resistance +2, circlet of health +2,* scroll of *bull's strength,* scroll of *bear's endurance,* iron key (unlocks bronzewood chest in area **8**, **9**, or **14**).

See the *Knights of the Lich-Queen* Mini-Game in *Polyhedron* #159 for more information on the holocaust warrior prestige class.

Thruzzl, Gray Slaad: hp 95; *Monster Manual* 231.

Tactics: Once alerted to the presence of intruders, Xam'kras sends his six githyanki subordinates to deal with the PCs, remaining behind with Ourydei to oversee the "conversion" of the gray slaad. Surrounding himself with a protective *wall of force,* Xam'kras takes the time to cast a selection of defensive spells, in the following order: *bear's endurance, displacement, fire shield, haste* (on self and allies), *stoneskin, resist energy* (fire), and *shield.* After 4 rounds of casting defensive spells, Xam'kras is ready to deal some pain, unloading a few of his favorite offensive spells (such as *prismatic spray,* maximized *lightning bolt,* and *chain lightning*) before blasting foes with his *staff of frost.* He saves *ray of enfeeblement* and *ray of exhaustion* for well-armored fighter-types and targets spellcasters with *enervation* and *flesh to stone.* If Ourydei is slain or he is reduced to half hit points, Xam'kras uses his *dimension door* ability to flee to area **13**, taking the fiendish beholder with him if he can.

Ourydei hovers in front of Xam'kras, swinging its *+2 longswords* at any foe that comes within reach. It closes its central eye whenever Xam'kras casts a spell and opens it again to prevent enemy spellcasters from reciprocating.

The other members of the Ch'r'ai can cast stilled spells without suffering the 15% chance of arcane spell failure for wearing armor. If they have time to prepare for battle, they quaff their *potions of bear's endurance* and *bull's strength* and cast *blur* before entering combat. Their favorite tactics include casting *true strike* as a quickened spell before attacking with their swords, bows, or ray spells. They also use their quickened *dimension door* ability to maneuver around their enemies and gain flanking bonuses while attacking with their *silver swords.*

11. SCRYING MIRROR

A 15-foot-high arch made of black spines rises from the floor. Embedded within the freestanding arch is a 12-foot-high, 8-foot-wide silver mirror.

Xam'kras uses this enormous mirror for scrying. The arch consists of two entwined goristro demon spines.

Spined Arch: hp 90; Hardness 8; break DC 36.

Scrying Mirror: hp 10; Hardness 2; break DC 15.

12. XAM'KRAS'S QUARTERS

A dozen obsidian shelves protrude from the walls, each one bearing a black candle that sheds a flickering blue flame. The room contains a large seven-sided table surrounded six matching chairs, with the seventh chair conspicuously absent. Sprouting from the floor of a windowed alcove is an 8-foot-tall, 5-foot-wide egg split vertically down the middle. Its shell has a smooth, almost mirrorlike texture, while silvery light ignites its interior.

Members of the Ch'r'ai meet here infrequently to discuss githyanki affairs and hatch plans for dealing with potential threats to the lich-queen's reign. Xam'kras keeps chairs around the table for his six lieutenants but has no need of one himself. The opened "egg" is Xam'kras's personal *rejuvenation pod* (see area 3).

Twelve *coldfire candles* (see "New Magic Items") illuminate the room.

13. XAM'KRAS'S LABORATORY (EL VARIES)

If he is forced to flee, Xam'kras (see area 10) retreats to this room and waits in ambush.

A quartet of 5-foot-tall, cast-iron candlesticks bear numerous black candles with flickering blue flames. The light dimly illuminates the room, revealing three obsidian shelves protruding from the walls at various heights and an 8-foot-diameter black disk hovering in the middle of the room, 20 feet above the floor.

Creature: Xam'kras drinks as many of his potions (see below) as he can to repair any damage suffered at the hands of the PCs, then hides behind the desk and waits for them to arrive.

Xam'kras, Master of the Ch'r'ai, Male Githyanki Wiz14: see area 10 for complete statistics.

Each candlestick holds five *coldfire candles* (see "New Magic Items"). The three shelves each bear some **Treasure**.

The black disk is made of obsidian and held aloft by a *permanent levitate* spell. It bears an ornate desk cluttered with various trinkets and spell components that Xam'kras has collected, including a couple of illithid skulls, a miniature bronze and glass orrery that reflects the cosmology of the planes, and a few empty scroll tubes made from githzerai bones. Characters who succeed at a Search check (DC 32) while searching the desk find a tiny secret compartment containing the **Treasure**.

Treasure: Shelf #1 is 10 feet high and bears ten githyanki skulls—the remains of Xam'kras's fallen rivals—and a collection of curative potions the githyanki wizard took from slain adventurers and is hoarding for personal use. The potions include six *potions of cure light wounds*, four *potions of cure moderate wounds*, and a *potion of cure serious wounds*.

Shelf #2 is 20 feet high and bears six spellbooks pinned between crystal bookends shaped like red dragons (1,200 gp for the pair). The spellbooks belong to Xam'kras and other wizards he has killed. Collectively, they hold all the spells Xam'kras has prepared (see area 10) plus 1d8 additional spells of each level (no 9th-level spells).

Shelf #3 is 40 feet high and bears a sealed jar containing a bit of red dragon flesh suspended in a liquid solution. Next to the jar rests a bone scroll tube engraved with a githyanki symbol spelling the name "Z'zish" ("Flame" in the Githyanki tongue). It contains a scroll of *clone*. The flesh belongs to a red dragon ally that Xam'kras vowed to return to life were it slain on the Prime Material Plane.

A secret compartment in Xam'kras's desk holds a piece of Astral driftmetal resembling one part of a githyanki tir'su. The driftmetal fragment is Piece #2 of a four-piece key needed to unlock Vlaakith's sarcophagus (see area 49 for details).

14. CH'R'AI QUARTERS (EL 8)

This chamber is identical to area 8, except that it belongs to a pair of githyanki named Jr'da'kr and Sziin, and it contains a different **Trap** and **Treasure**.

Trap: Inscribed on the inside lid of the chest is a *mirhanac symbol* cast by Xam'kras that activates when the chest is opened improperly.

***Mirhanac Symbol* Trap:** See the "Githyanki *Symbols*" section for details.

Treasure: The bronzewood chest in this room contains some githyanki body wrappings and garments, 150 pp, a bag containing twelve 100-gp pearls, a scroll of *crushing despair* (caster level 14th), a scroll of *touch of idiocy* (caster level 6th), and a rusty iron globe (actually *iron bands of Bilarro*). The chest also contains a secret compartment (DC 25 Search check to locate) holding a spellbook with bone covers. The spellbook contains the same spells as the book found in area 8.

15. DUTHKA'GITH QUARTERS

Intense heat fills this spacious chamber. Growing out of black crystalline "shrubs" in the middle of the floor are nine 8-foot-tall, 5-foot-wide eggs composed of silvery matter. The eggs are grouped together in clusters of three.

Any living creature that sets foot in the room takes 2d6 points of fire damage per round from the ambient heat. The "eggs" are *rejuvenation pods* (see area 3) used by the duthka'gith guards in area 20. None of the duthka'giths are presently in this room, and all the pods are empty.

16. CHAPEL OF THE DRAGON QUEEN

Carved out of the wall between a pair of tall red-crystal windows is a 15-foot tall obsidian statue of a five-headed dragon with multicolored gems set into its eyes. Two ornate, obsidian braziers filled with crackling flames stand against opposite walls, their crackling flames illuminating and warming this chapel. Through the haze of whispered voices, you hear a singularly ominous word: "Tiamat."

Although they revere the githyanki lich-queen, duthka'giths also pay homage to the queen of evil dragons, Tiamat. The statue in the corner of the chapel depicts Tiamat, and its eye gems are the chamber's only **Treasure**.

Treasure: Ten gems are set into the eyes of the statue, roughly 15 feet above the floor. The white dragon's head is set with two white pearls (100 gp each). The black dragon's head has two black pearls (500 gp each) for eyes. The green dragon's head has a pair of emeralds (1,000 gp each) for eyes. The blue dragon's eyes are actually sapphires (2,500 gp each). Finally, the red dragon's eyes are large rubies (5,000 gp each). The total value of the gemstones is 18,200 gp.

17. DUTHKA'GITH QUARTERS (EL 18)

This room is identical to area **15**, except that all nine *rejuvenation pods* are wreathed in strands of energy and are occupied.

Creatures: Each of the nine *rejuvenation pods* contains a resting duthka'gith warrior. If one of them is disturbed, they all emerge from their pods.

Male and Female Githyanki Duthka'gith Ftr8 (9): CR 12; Medium Dragon (augmented humanoid, fire); HD 8d12+16; hp 93, 90, 82, 79, 75, 75, 70, 65, 62; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., fly 110 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20; BAB +8/+3; Grap +13; Atk +15 melee (2d6+10/17–20, *+1 greatsword*) or +15 melee (1d6+5, bite) or +10 ranged (1d8+6/×3, *+1 composite longbow* [+5 Str]); Full Atk +15/+10 melee (2d6+10/17–20, *+1 greatsword*) and +11 melee (1d6+2, bite) or +13 melee (1d6+5, bite) and +11 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws) or +10/+5 ranged (1d8+6/×3, *+1 composite longbow* [+5 Str]); SA breath weapon (6d8 cone of fire; Reflex DC 12 half), psionics, smite good 1/day (+8 damage); SQ darkvision 60 ft., cold resistance 5, fire immunity, psionics; SR 13; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 20, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 12.

Skills: Craft (armorsmithing) +4, Craft (weaponsmithing) +4, Jump +9, Listen +4, Ride +5, Search +3, Spot +4. *Feats:* Alertness, Improved Critical (greatsword), Iron Will, Multiattack, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 11), *dimension door, mage hand, telekinesis* (DC 16). Caster level 8th; save DC 11 + spell level.

Possessions: +1 driftmetal breastplate (see the "Astral Driftmetal" sidebar), *+1 greatsword, +1 composite longbow* [+5 Str], with 50 arrows, *potion of bull's strength, potion of bear's endurance, potion of haste.*

Tactics: If they have time to prepare before entering battle, the duthka'giths drink their potions (*bear's endurance* first, followed by *bull's strength* and *haste*). If they are unable to flank their foes using their quickened *dimension door* ability, the duthka'giths form into groups of three. Within each group, two duthka'giths use aid another actions (see the Aid Another description in the *Player's Handbook*) to improve the attack rolls of the third duthka'gith in the group.

18. CELL (EL 20)

A nude githyanki with shackled wrists dangles from an iron hook on the far wall, such that his feet can't quite touch the floor. A terrible mark has been branded on his emaciated chest.

The githyanki has *dimensional shackles* binding his wrists, and the shackles are looped over a hook driven deep into the wall. (Xam'kras carries a key that unlocks the *shackles*.) The symbol carved into his chest is a githyanki tir'su that spells the word "kiir'vrahc" ("betrayer" in the Githyanki tongue). Although he seems quite alone, the githyanki prisoner is not the room's sole occupant.

Creatures: Ellv is a spy for the Sha'sal Khou. He disappeared from Tu'narath some time ago and is presumed dead. In truth, Xam'kras is keeping Ellv alive pending interrogation. Ellv knows of Zetch'r'r's involvement with the Sha'sal Khou, and soon the Ch'r'ai will, too. Ellv has no loyalty to Vlaakith or her minions and will fight alongside the PCs for his freedom. However, he is loyal only to Zetch'r'r and the Sha'sal Khou, and PCs who oppose the Sha'sal Khou quickly earn Ellv's enmity.

Ellv is guarded by a tl'a'ikith that lurks near the darkened ceiling. It descends to attack any creature that tries to free the prisoner.

Tl'a'ikith: hp 104; use the sample Tl'a'ikith statistics at the end of the adventure (described under the Tl'a'ikith template).

Ellv, Male Githyanki Ftr10: CR 12; Medium Humanoid (extraplanar); HD 10d10; hp 64 (currently 1); Init +1; Spd 30 ft., fly 140 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10; BAB +10/+5; Grap +12; Atk +12 melee (1d3+2 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +11 ranged; Full Atk +12/+7 melee (1d3+2 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +11/+6 ranged; SA psionics; SQ darkvision 60 ft., psionics; SR 15; AL LE; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Craft (armorsmithing) +12, Craft (weaponsmithing) +12, Intimidate +7, Jump +8, Listen +3, Ride +7, Spot +3. *Feats:* Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*silver sword*), Improved Trip, Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 9), *dimension door, mage hand, telekinesis* (DC 14); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 16). Caster level 10th; save DC 9 + spell level.

Tactics: If the *dimensional shackles* are removed and he is too weak or ill equipped to fight, Ellv uses his *plane shift* ability to flee the palace. If the PCs heal his wounds and provide him with serviceable armor and weapons, Ellv remains with them until

reduced to half hit points again, at which point he flees. If he is somehow trapped inside the palace, Ellv will not allow himself to be captured alive again, taking his own life if necessary.

The tl'a'ikith casts *weird* as a quickened spell each round, hoping to kill or stun enemy spellcasters while it clashes swords with frontline fighter-types.

19. TELEPORTATION CIRCLE

This room is empty except for a 10-foot-diameter circular symbol carved into the floor.

The symbol carved into the floor is a githyanki tir'su that spells the word "zanhkor" ("exit" in the Githyanki tongue). The symbol is a *teleportation circle:* Any creature that stands inside the circle and speaks the word "zanhkor" causes the symbol to glow with a silver light and teleport all creatures atop it to a similar *teleportation circle* in area 1, at the base of the statue of Gith.

20. DREADNOUGHT HALL (EL VARIES)

The bones and lifeless husks of the dead litter the floor of this horrid hall. Overhead, a monstrous creature—over 60 feet long from head to tail—hangs from the vaulted ceiling by great iron chains and hooks. The monster is covered in thick, spiked plates. A single dead eye stares down at the carnage, and the creature's great maw hangs agape, its black throat disappearing into deep oblivion. Two gnarled limbs jut from its massive shoulders, ending in pincers held aloft by more hooked chains. Below the monster's distended torso is a serpentine tail that trails off into the shadows of this sepulchral hall.

The hall is occupied, but the number of occupants may vary depending on the circumstances (see **Creatures**, below). The monster hanging from the ceiling is an astral dreadnought slain by Vlaakith herself. PCs who enter the mouth of the astral dreadnought can reach all the way to the monster's 10-foot-diameter gullet, which contains the **Treasure** and a **Trap**.

The bodies and bones littering the floor are the remains of skeletons and zombies (the lich-queen's unworthy foes) that the duthka'giths destroyed while using the hall for combat training exercises. Among many dead githyanki lie the remains of several githzerai, humans, elves, dwarves, and other humanoids. Amid the bones and corpses are some nonmagical weapons and bits of armor.

Creatures (EL 18): In various corners of the room stand a dozen mostly intact githyanki zombies—the animated remains of Vlaakith's past victims that the duthka'giths have yet to destroy. These zombies periodically wander the hall and attack only in self-defense. Unless they have been summoned elsewhere, nine duthka'giths are also here, engaging one another in mock duels beneath the dead astral dreadnought and above the bones and bodies strewn across the floor (they know about the fly ability granted by the palace. They attack interlopers on sight.

Male and Female Githyanki Duthka'gith Ftr8 (9): hp 91, 88, 85, 78, 73, 71, 65, 64, 60; see area 17 for complete statistics.

Githyanki Zombies (12): CR 1/2; Medium Undead (extraplanar); HD 2d12+3; hp 16 each; Init +0; Spd 20 ft. (can't run; base 30 ft.); AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; BAB +1; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (2d6+3/19–20, greatsword) or +3 melee (1d6+3, slam); Full Atk +3 melee (2d6+3/19–20, greatsword) or +3 melee (1d6+3, slam); SQ damage reduction 5/slashing, single actions only, undead type; AL NE; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 11, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Feats: Toughness.

Possessions: Breastplate, greatsword.

Treasure: The astral dreadnought's gullet contains many treasures taken from Vlaakith's fallen enemies or engulfed by the dreadnought before its demise. PCs who search the gullet find the following items:

- The skeleton of a dwarf cleric of Moradin wearing *dwarven plate* and a *belt of dwarvenkind*
- The dessicated corpse of a githzerai monk wearing an *amulet of mighty fists +2*
- The flayed corpse of an illithid (see **Trap** below)
- A *bag of holding* (type II) containing several items belonging to Valciron Stormbow, the elf trapped in Vlaakith's *mirror of life trapping* (see area 38): *+2 elven chain*, a *+2/+1 two-bladed sword*, a *+1 composite shock longbow* [+3 Str], a quiver of 24 arrows, a *+3 amulet of natural armor*, and three *potions of cure moderate wounds*.
- Assorted trinkets, including a *potion of haste*, a divine scroll (with the spells *antipathy*, *greater dispel magic*, and *mass cure serious wounds* cast at 17th level), an arcane scroll (with the spells *disintegrate* and *Tenser's transformation* cast at 15th level), and a quiver holding six *+2 ghost touch arrows*.
- A piece of Astral driftmetal shaped like a piece of a githyanki symbol. The driftmetal fragment is Piece #3 of a four-piece key needed to unlock Vlaakith's sarcophagus (see area 49 for details).

Trap (EL 8): Any creature touching the flayed illithid corpse must succeed at a Will save (DC 25) or be affected by a psychic poison called lanshita. Whether the saving throw was successful or not, the caster must succeed at another saving throw 1 minute later to avoid secondary damage.

Psychic Poison Trap: CR 8; touch trigger (attached); no reset; psychic poison (lanshita, Will save DC 25 resists, 2d6 Cha/2d6 Cha; Search DC —; Disable Device DC —.

21. SKIN SPHERE (EL –)

This horrid chamber is unlike any you've seen. The walls are made of sewn illithid flesh, stretched into a near-perfect 30-foot-diameter sphere. The walls flex and undulate, as though pressed upon by hundreds of bodies trapped on the other side. Muffled wails fill the room, drowning the whispers that echo elsewhere through the palace.

Vlaakith fashioned the skin sphere as a meditation chamber—a room where she could not hear the whispers of the fallen githyanki whose souls she'd claimed. Ropes of entwined sinew are tied to stone rings affixed to the outer walls; these sinewy cords hold the shape of the sphere and keep it taut. Trapped in the spaces between the outer walls and the skin sphere are 666 animated githyanki and githzerai zombies. Their mindless, incessant wailing comforts the lich-queen in ways the palace's whispers don't.

The skin sphere has 10 hit points per 5-foot section. A 5-foot tear in the skin sphere releases 2d6 zombies, which clamber into the room and tumble down to the bottom of the sphere. If a single tear grows to fill five 5-foot areas, all of the zombies tumble into the room as the skin sphere collapses. The charnel sea of writhing flesh and limbs fills the room except for the 20 feet closest to the ceiling (blocking the door to area **20**). The zombified door to area **22** opens, and zombies slowly begin spilling into that area (and area **23**). In the course of several hours, the zombies fill all available floorspace in areas **21**, **22**, **23**, **29**, and **30**.

Any creature that moves through the sea of zombies moves at one-quarter speed and takes 2d8+18 points of damage every round from being clawed, bitten, and crushed between bodies.

Creatures: The 666 zombies trapped behind the skin sphere are more of a nuisance than a threat to high-level characters. Although many of the zombies include the remains of slain adventurers, they no longer carry anything of value.

Gith Zombies (666): hp 16 each; see area **20** for complete statistics.

22. FACES OF GITH

Protruding from the obsidian walls—20 feet above the floor—are three 10-foot-tall frescoes depicting the stern visage of a female githyanki warrior. Each face glares down at you scornfully, and carved into its forehead is a circular symbol you recognize.

The frescoes depict the warrior Gith, and each has the symbol of Gith (as seen in area **1**) carved into its forehead. The visages are haunting but harmless.

23. HALL OF GITH (EL 17)

Dozens of obsidian shelves protrude from the walls of this great, hollow sepulcher. Atop each shelf rests a black candle that sheds a flickering blue flame. In the middle of the floor, atop a raised dais, rests an oblong sarcophagus of red crystal carved in the shape of a dragon, its folded wings forming the lid. Encircling the dais are more than a hundred life-sized statues. Each statue faces the sarcophagus and depicts a kneeling githyanki woman wearing regal garments and a crown.

The room contains 156 statues, each depicting a githyanki queen from Vlaakith I to Vlaakith CLVI. Notable by its absence is a statue representing the reigning queen, Vlaakith CLVII. All of the statues kneel before the sarcophagus of Gith, legendary liberator of the githyanki people. Although Gith's fate is unknown, it is believed that she will someday return, and that when she finally passes, her remains will be sequestered here.

PCs who approach the sarcophagus can see runes carved into the red crystal lid. They read: "*Death befalls any creature that disturbs the ashes of Gith.*" PCs who inspect the sarcophagus and succeed at a Search check (DC 25) discover that the eyes of the dragon-headed sarcophagus can be depressed, and that doing so will cause the crystal wings that form the lid to part. PCs can also spring the lid open with a successful Open Lock check (DC 40) or force the lid open with a successful Strength check (DC 30). The sarcophagus appears to contain nothing but ashes.

Red Crystal Sarcophagus: 6 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 180; break DC 30; Open Lock DC 40 (lid).

Creature (EL 17): The lich-queen has placed an undead guardian inside the sarcophagus, fully expecting that Gith will never return to claim this sepulcher for herself. Opening the sarcophagus causes the ashes within to burst into flames. An instant later, the flames leap forth as an effigy—the undead remains of Vlaakith's last githyanki consort. The effigy is bound to this room and cannot leave it unless Vlaakith commands it to.

Effigy: hp 189; *Monster Manual II* 89. If you do not have access to the *Monster Manual II*, substitute a nightwalker (*Monster Manual* 196) for the effigy. Assume that the inside of the sarcophagus is an extradimensional space capable of holding the Huge undead, but the creature can leave freely if the lid is opened. Note that this drops the EL of this encounter to 16.

24. EMPTY SEPULCHER

This dark chamber connecting areas **22**, **25**, and **26** is completely empty.

25. GUEST QUARTERS

A triangular table—its surface of stitched flesh stretched over a bone frame—dominates this room. Three chairs of similar construction surround it. The table corners and chair backs are further adorned with tiny demonic skulls. Obsidian gargoyles leer at you from ledges high on the walls, and carved niches filled with monstrous skulls add to the gloomy décor. Unlike other areas of the palace, the whispers of the damned are barely audible here.

Guests of the lich-queen are quartered here, although Vlaakith is currently entertaining no one. The furnishings are morbid but ordinary, the leering gargoyles are inanimate, and the skulls belong to many different types of creatures that githyanki abhor or routinely hunt.

Development: If the PCs are having a relatively easy time stomping through the lower level of the lich-queen's palace (not likely, but possible), feel free to place a pair of ultroloths (CR 18; see *Manual of the Planes*, page 187, for statistics) here as guests.

26. THE BLACK HEART (EL 17)

This vaulted chamber appears empty except for a 10-foot-square shaft in the ceiling (leading up to area **31**). Read or paraphrase the following as the PCs enter:

Vile images and dark thoughts fill your head as you enter this empty heart-shaped vault, as though some dreadful worm has burrowed into your subconscious and begun tearing at your soul with its teeth.

This room radiates an overwhelming necromantic aura when a *detect magic* spell is cast.

Trap: Intelligent living creatures that enter the room must succeed at a Will save (DC 30) or be stunned for 25 rounds by the horrible, mind-splintering pain. A creature that succeeds at the save is immune to the effects of the room from that point on, having demonstrated the ability to banish the room's evil from its mind. The stunning effect can be removed with a successful *break enchantment* spell (DC 31).

Any creature stunned for the full duration of the effect must succeed at another Will save (DC 30). An evil creature that fails this second save has its psyche warped so that it believes Vlaakith is a trusted ally; further, any attack it makes against the lich-queen deals it 1d6 points of permanent Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma drain. A nonevil creature that fails the second Will save suffers a permanent alignment shift to chaotic evil as every shred of its good and decent nature is consumed. If the formerly good-aligned creature leaves the room and returns, it must succeed at a new set of saves or suffer the room's psyche-warping effect on evil creatures.

A *wish* or *miracle* spell is needed to restore a creature's true alignment or remove the psyche-warping effect on an evil creature (a *restoration* or *greater restoration* spell is further needed to restore drained ability score points).

Development: Nonevil characters who turn evil usually become nonplayer characters controlled by you. However, their alignment shift isn't immediately obvious, and if you feel particularly insidious, you might consider allowing players to continue running their characters until their evil manifests or is revealed (by a *detect evil* spell, for instance). Alternatively, a DM may allow mature players to run evil characters, provided they are willing to play their characters appropriately. In this case, the DM should take these players aside and inform them of their characters' new outlook.

27. GUEST QUARTERS

This room is appointed similarly to area **25** and is unoccupied.

28. KNIGHT'S SEPULCHER (EL 9)

A black sarcophagus, its lid carved in the likeness of a githyanki knight, rises from a sea of white bones covered the floor of this dark sepulcher.

The sarcophagus holds the remains of an unnamed githyanki warlord who died protecting Vlaakith I from githzerai assassins on the eve of her coronation. As a commemorative gesture, githzerai bones litter the floor surrounding his tomb.

The obsidian lid of the sarcophagus (hardness 8; hp 60) has been sealed with an *arcane lock* spell (break DC 28, 38 with the *arcane lock* spell in place). Inside lies the perfectly preserved, mummified remains of the githyanki knight and the **Treasure**. The sarcophagus's contents are also trapped (see **Trap**, below).

Trap: The first creature (other than Vlaakith) to remove an item from the sarcophagus triggers a *horrid wilting* spell that affects all creatures in the sepulcher. Inscribed on the inside walls of the sarcophagus are runes that warn of a curse that reads, "Gir tar'rac neh toruun" ("One theft consumes all"). A rogue can disable the trap by scratching away the "toruun" ("theft") rune.

***Horrid Wilting* Trap:** CR 9; magic device; touch trigger; no reset; spell effect (*horrid wilting*, 25th-level wizard, 20d6 damage or 20d8 damage to water elementals and plant creatures, DC 29 Fortitude save half damage); Search DC 33; Disable Device DC 33.

Treasure: The mummified githyanki is wrapped in ceremonial bandages. Over its bandages it wears a golden breastplate set with precious stones (9,000 gp), a golden headdress shaped like a bejeweled scorpion with pincers protecting the eyes (12,000 gp), and ornate golden vambraces (3,000 gp for the set). Resting beside the knight are the shattered fragments of a black greatsword, its golden hilt shaped like a scorpion (500 gp for the hilt). Under the head of the mummified knight rests a fragment of Astral driftmetal shaped like part of a githyanki symbol. The driftmetal fragment is Piece #4 of a four-piece key needed to unlock Vlaakith's sarcophagus (see area **49** for details).

29. TORMENTORY (EL 16)

Four-foot-long serrated iron spikes thrust from the walls of this octagonal chamber. Impaled on a good many of them are the naked bodies and severed heads of myriad sentient creatures. The corpses have stripped of their possessions, and all bare unflinching expressions of eternal dread. Eight gaunt githyanki warriors stand in a circle in the middle of the dark room, surrounding the crumpled form of a humanoid creature with rubbery, slimy flesh and tentacles encircling a lampreylike mouth. The hapless thing writhes in agony.

The creatures impaled on the wall spikes have been dead a long time, but since bodies don't decay as rapidly on the Astral Plane, their shriveled husks remain gruesome testaments to the lich-queen's horrid sense of décor.

Creatures: The creature writhing in agony on the floor is Quezasserun, a mind flayer sorcerer captured by the Ch'r'ai. Quezasserun was dragged before the lich-queen and subjected to an *eternity of torture* spell, as described in Vlaakith's copy of the *book of vile darkness* (see area **36**). In its present tormented state, the mind flayer is helpless. The torment can be broken with a successful *greater dispel magic* or *break enchantment* spell cast against DC 36. Even if it is freed from the spell, however, Quezasserun has suffered permanent ability drain. All of the mind flayer's ability scores have been reduced to 0 except Constitution, which is 1.

The eight creatures surrounding Quezasserun are githyanki zombies. They attack only if the PCs try to reach Quezasserun or if the PCs attack them. If the illithid somehow breaks free of the spell, the zombies have instructions to hack it to pieces.

Vlaakith has placed a spell on each zombie that causes it to explode in a 10-foot-radius burst of black fire if it takes even 1 point of damage. The burst deals 5d6 points of vile damage, destroys the zombie, and causes any other zombies within range to explode as well. Vile damage can only be healed by magic cast within the area of a *consecrate* or *hallow* spell.

Quezasserun, Male Mind Flayer Sor9: hp 109 (currently 17); *Monster Manual* 187.

Githyanki Zombies (8): hp 1 each (see above); see area **20** for complete statistics.

Tactics: If some or all of Quezasserun's drained ability points are restored, the illithid tries to arrange a short-term alliance with its saviors. The mind flayer was captured sneaking around Tu'narath in *polymorphed* form and seeks only to escape from the lich-queen's palace. It encourages the PCs to do the same. The torture it's suffered has left an indelible imprint on its psyche, and it avoids a confrontation with Vlaakith at all costs.

NEW ALCHEMICAL SUBSTANCES

Vlaakith has perfected three new alchemical substances, which are located in her private brewery (area **34**).

Astral Effluvium: Imagine the swirling emotions of a thousand hopeless souls trapped in the form of an ephemeral silver liquid tinged with every color of the rainbow. When released on the Astral Plane, this mental effluvium explodes in a 10-foot-radius, mind-affecting burst of psychic energy. Creatures who fail a Will save (DC 20) are overcome by powerful emotions and stunned for 1d4 rounds. A single vial of astral effluvium costs 750 gp and has negligible weight.

Cerebral Grist: Grinding the dried brain of an intellect devourer into fine dust and mixing it with various unguents yields this potent white powder. When sprinkled onto the putrefied husk of a dead creature, cerebral grist instantly liquifies the remains, transforming the corpse into a patch of velvety mold imbued with psychic energy. When a living creature touches the patch, it explodes with psychic spores that deal 2d6 points of temporary Intelligence damage (Will save DC 17 negates) to all creatures within a 10-foot-radius burst. The damage is doubled (4d6) if the creature from which the mold is created had latent psionic abilities, such as an illithid or githyanki. Sonic energy destroys the patch, while sunlight renders it dormant. A tiny pouch of cerebral grist (enough for a single use) costs 500 gp and weighs 0.5 lb.

Netherflame: This nonmagical, charcoal-colored liquid explodes on impact. All living creatures in a 5-foot-radius burst centered at the point of impact are engulfed in horrible black flames that deal 1d6 points of damage per round for 5 rounds. Even creatures that are resistant or immune to fire take full damage. The black flames can be doused only by the touch of a sunrod. A single flask of netherflame costs 1,800 gp and weighs 1 lb.

30. TROPHY VAULT (EL 16)

Three obsidian braziers carved to resemble crouching demons sink their claws into the floor of this vaulted chamber. Black flames leap from the braziers, barely illuminating the plethora of vile trophies placed here for the lich-queen's amusement. Eight obsidian statues carved to resemble robed githyanki wizards stand against the walls. Each statue holds an obsidian tray with some horrible display atop it.

Three wrought-iron cages levitate in the air 20 feet above the floor. One cage is stuffed full of githzerai heads, another holds a vulturelike demon plucked of feathers, and the third holds a comely human girl with bronze-colored hair.

The black flames rising from the braziers radiate moderate evil. The flames cannot be doused or snuffed, although destroying the brazier (Hardness 8; hp 60; break DC 33) also puts out its flame. Any living creature that touches a black flame suffers 1d4 negative levels and take 1d8 points of fire damage.

An *arcane lock* spell seals each iron cage. Each cage is also magically attuned to the braziers in the room, such that opening a cage unleashes the Creatures bound in the black flames.

Spiked Iron Cages (3): 1-in.-thick bars; Hardness 10; hp 60; break DC 28 (38 for the *arcane locked* door).

The githzerai heads in the first cage belong to members of a monastery wiped out by Vlaakith and her thralls. They have *animate dead* spells cast on them. When a creature approaches within 5 feet of the cage, the heads open their eyes and begin murmuring the name "Vlaakith" repeatedly. Each head has AC 11, 1 hit point, and no effective attacks.

The featherless demon in the second cage is a vrock (described under Creatures, below).

The comely human girl is actually a juvenile bronze dragon in altered form (described under Creatures, below).

The eight statues display the following trophies:

- The bloodied wings of a trumpet archon
- A black lump of lead (actually a transformed silver trumpet taken from a slain trumpet archon) and the shattered blade of a magic greatsword (formerly the archon's *+4 greatsword*).
- A ulitharid's dessicated brain
- A gold dragon's shriveled heart
- A dead cleric's heavy mace (see Treasure, below)
- The bejeweled crown of a dead king (see Treasure, below)
- The flayed white skin of an aasimar paladin
- The petrified owl familiar of a dead elf wizard

Creatures: Opening any one of the cages triggers a spell that transforms the braziers' black flames into blackfire elementals (fire elementals with the energy drain ability). The elementals leap from the braziers and attack all intruders.

Vlaakith summoned the vrock using a *planar binding* spell. The proud creature claimed to have once been a powerful balor who was wrongfully punished by his superiors. Vlaakith destroyed a part of the creature's brain, depriving it of its spell-like abilities, then had him plucked and caged for his folly and her amusement.

The juvenile bronze dragon barely fits inside the cage in her draconic form, so she often assumes humanoid form to make her dismal accommodations tolerable. The dragon once served a gnome wizard as a cohort and mount, but Vlaakith captured the dragon shortly after destroying her master.

Greater Blackfire Elementals (3): CR 13; Spd 60 ft., fly 60 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; hp 178 each; Atk +22 melee (2d8+7 plus 2d8 fire plus 1d4 negative levels, slam); Full Atk +22 melee (2d8+7 plus 2d8 fire plus 1d4 negative levels, 2 slams); SA burn, energy drain; see *Monster Manual* 97 (fire elemental, greater) for other statistics.

Energy Drain (Su): A living creature hit by a blackfire elemental's slam attack gains 1d4 negative levels. For each negative level it deals, the elemental heals 5 hit points of damage.

Jareel, Vrock: CR 7; hp 78; see *Monster Manual* 48 (demon, vrock). The vrock's reduced CR reflects its lost spell-like abilities (including its ability to summon other tanar'ri).

Aezenstar, Female Juvenile Bronze Dragon: hp 142; see *Monster Manual* 80.

Tactics: The elementals are not terribly bright and use uninspired tactics. The vrock begs for release, willing to serve its liberators indefinitely for its freedom and some tasty food. However, it is quite mad and doesn't keep its promises for long. If the PCs refuse to free it from its cage, it may use its stunning screech on the PCs as they fight the blackfire elementals.

If the PCs free her, Aezenstar helps them fight the blackfire elementals. If she survives, she offers to join their quest, for better or ill. She can also warn them of the traps and guardians in the lich-queen's throne room (area 7), which is where her master was killed and she was captured.

Treasure: The dead cleric's heavy mace is actually a *+1 heavy mace of disruption*. The bejeweled crown has the same properties as a *ring of major spell storing*. Currently, it contains a *heal* spell.

SECOND FLOOR (AREAS 31–38)

The following encounters are keyed to the map of the second floor.

31. QUEEN'S DEFENDERS (EL 23)

This dark chamber is connected to the ground floor by a 10-foot-wide chute that opens into the ceiling of area 26. The room itself contains no furnishings but is guarded.

Creatures (EL 23): Three tl'a'ikiths float amid the shadows near the ceiling.

Tl'a'ikiths (3): hp 104 each; use the sample Tl'a'ikith statistics at the end of the adventure (described under the Tl'a'ikith template).

Tactics: One tl'a'ikith remains hidden near the ceiling and casts *weird* spells (two per round) at intruders. The other two tl'a'ikiths descend and attack, preventing intruders from reaching area 32 and pursuing them beyond the chamber's confines, if necessary.

32. TAPESTRY OF FLESH

This hexagonal chamber is empty except for a 30-foot-tall tapestry of sewn flesh hanging from an iron rod on one wall. Dozens of different skins are sewn into the gruesome tapestry, including the skins of several mind flayers, githzerai, humans, elves, and demons. What seem at first to be small gems adorning the horrific work are actually glazed eyeballs.

The tapestry of flesh is hideous, but it has no special properties.

33. VILE TAPESTRY (EL 18)

This chamber is identical to area **32**. Unlike the tapestry of sewn flesh in area **32**, however, the tapestry in this room poses a threat to any living creature that enters the room.

Creature: The tapestry of stitched flesh and eyeballs is actually an undead creature that attempts to wrap the first living creature that it can reach in its gruesome folds. The hidden side of the tapestry is lined with teeth and fangs that carve into the flesh of the enveloped creature. The tapestry can easily tear from the wall to pursue prey beyond the room.

Vile Tapestry: CR 18; Huge Undead; HD 24d12; hp 197; Init +4; Spd 15 ft., fly 30 ft. (poor), fly 40 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 26, touch 8, flat-footed 26; BAB +12; Grap +28; Atk +18 melee (3d6+12 vile, bite) or +18 melee (3d6+12 vile, slam); Full Atk +18/+13 melee (3d6+12 vile, bite) or +18/+13 melee (3d6+12 vile, slam); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA improved grab, vile damage; SQ damage reduction 10/holy, resistance 10 (acid, cold, electricity), undead type; SR 29; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +10, Will +17; Str 27, Dex 11, Con —, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 1.

Skills: Listen +11, Move Silently +8, Spot +11. *Feats:* Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Hover, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the vile tapestry must hit with its bite or slam attack. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and deals automatic bite or slam damage during subsequent rounds.

Vile Damage (Su): Damage dealt by the tapestry can only be healed by magic cast within the area of a *consecrate* or *hallow* spell.

34. ALCHEMICAL BREWERY

Numerous shelves protrude from the walls of this octagonal chamber. Atop each shelf sits a black candle that burns with a cold blue flame. Nine crystal tables fill the room. However, only three of the tables rest on the floor; the other five levitate about the room, the highest one suspended 40 feet above the floor, about 10 feet below the apex of the ceiling. Each table is its own laboratory, complete with myriad flasks holding a multitude of alchemical and arcane substances.

Forty-nine *coldfire candles* illuminate the room (see "New Magic Items" for details). Five of the chamber's eight crystal tables (hardness 10; hp 50) are held aloft by *permanent levitate* spells and can be pushed around with relative ease, although overturning one requires a Strength check (DC 20) and could spell disaster for anyone below. The tables resting on the floor do not have *levitate* spells placed on them and are thus harder to move.

The PCs could spend hours searching through the contents of the lich-queen's brewery. A complete inventory of the room's contents is provided under **Treasure**, below. None of the contents are important enough to Vlaakith that she feels she must post guards here.

Treasure: Each of the tables bears the equivalent of an alchemist's lab (500 gp). Among the various sundry items are several potions and alchemical substances.

Table #1 (on the floor) bears six flasks of acid, a *potion of darkness* (oil), and a *potion of rage*.

Table #2 (on the floor) carries three sunrods and three flasks of netherflame (see the "New Alchemical Substances" sidebar).

Table #3 (on the floor) holds a *potion of eagle's splendor*, three flasks of alchemist's fire, and an ebon box with platinum hinges (540 gp) containing 270 tindertwigs.

Table #4 bears a *potion of protection from energy* (sonic) and eight vials of astral effluvium (see the "New Alchemical Substances" sidebar).

Table #5 supports six flasks of alchemist's frost (as alchemist's fire, except it deals cold damage), two *potions of keen edge* (oil), and a *potion of greater magic weapon +5* (oil).

Table #6 holds four pouches of cerebral grist (see the "New Alchemical Substances" sidebar), four thunderstones, and a tanglefoot bag.

Table #7 bears three flasks of alchemist's spark (as alchemist's fire, except it deals electricity damage) and bottled spell components used to enhance evil spells (strips of flesh, hearts, eyes, fingers, tongues, and feathers).

Table #8 supports three flasks of netherflame (see the "New Alchemical Substances" sidebar), six flasks of potent acid (2d6 acid damage with 1d3 splash damage), and two flasks of improved alchemist's fire (2d6 fire damage with 1d3 splash damage).

35. ECTOPLASMIC THROAT

Unlike other corridors in the palace, this hallway is only 10 feet tall. Most of the hall, except for a 10-foot-square section at one end, is filled by a tubular mass of undulating ectoplasm. This ectoplasmic "throat" measures 8 feet in diameter and ends before an oval orifice filled with impenetrable, silvery-gray mist.

The ectoplasmic passage ends before a gray mist door leading to Vlaakith's reliquary (area **38**). Vlaakith created the "throat" from astral effluvium and gave it a shred of sentience. It is impervious to physical attacks and magic, although psionic attacks can damage it. The throat has 90 hit points per 10-foot section.

When a living creature enters the throat, it flexes and contracts. Ripples of astral energy pull the creature along the entire length of the throat and jettison it through the gray mist portal, into area 38. The throat deals no damage, although an ejected creature lands prone and may take damage as it passes through the mist-filled doorway (see the "Doors" section under "Palace Features" for details). A creature can resist being pulled down the throat with a successful Fortitude save (DC 30), but a new save is required at the beginning of each round spent inside the throat.

36. VLAAKITH'S TREASURY (EL VARIES)

Three smooth, black pillars support the ceiling of this dark room. A 10-foot-diameter circular symbol has been carved into the floor between the pillars and filled with silver, and crouched inside the circle is a squat and blubbery humanoid with hideous physical deformities enveloped in a shimmering emerald field. A continuous, 3-foot-wide obsidian shelf protrudes from several walls 4 feet above the floor. Twelve chests rest atop this shelf, each one crafted with a distinctive motif.

The circular symbol carved into the floor is a githyanki tir'su that spells the word "Revrykal" ("servant" in the Githyanki tongue). The symbol is part of a *greater planar binding* spell. The creature confined to the circle has assumed the form of a dretch demon to appear less threatening and is described under **Creatures**, below. The black pillars that seem to support the ceiling, in fact, do not; the pillars are also described under **Creatures**.

Treasure/Traps: The chests are locked, and Vlaakith carries the keys. Each chest is described below:

Chest #1 is fashioned from Astral driftmetal (1 in. thick; hardness 12; hp 30; break DC 30) and lined with spikes. It contains six books: a *manual of gainful exercise* +2, a *manual of quickness in action* +2, a *manual of bodily health* +2, a *tome of clear thought* +2, a *tome of understanding* +2, and a *tome of leadership and influence* +2. The inside lid of the chest has a *t'rac symbol* inscribed on it.

***T'rac Symbol* Trap:** See the "Githyanki *Symbols*" section for details.

Chest #2 is made of alchemically treated wood (2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 30; break DC 22) and has a death slaad's skull molded into its curved lid. The chest is filled with vials suspended in wooden racks. Each vial contains a single dose of poison—one of each type of contact, ingested, and injury poison listed on page 297 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. (As the DM, you may expand the selection to include poisons from the *Arms and Equipment Guide*, the *Book of Vile Darkness*, or other sources.)

Chest #3 is made of mortared illithid and githzerai spines (2 in. thick; hardness 6; hp 30; break DC 23) and is adorned with illithid skulls. Piled inside the chest are four shriveled illithid brains and ten black, pulpy githzerai hearts. The illithid brains are infected with a disease called mindfire (see page 292 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for effects). Anyone touching a brain risks infection. If thrown, a brain explodes on impact and releases mindfire spores in a 10-foot-radius area. Each githzerai heart radiates faint Necromancy magic and acts as a *potion of inflict moderate wounds*, healing undead and harming any other type of creature that devours it. (Vlaakith uses the githzerai hearts to heal damage.)

Chest #4 is fashioned from bronzewood (2 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 60; break DC 28) sculpted in the likeness of a red dragon and painted with red scales. An iron lock shaped like a dragon's head binds the chest. Inside rest eight ornate crystal flasks (100 gp each) filled with a greenish ectoplasm called *death's ichor*, created by Vlaakith using the *crown of corruption* (see "New Artifacts" for details). Each flask provides enough *death's ichor* to count for 1,600 XP when making an item or paying the XP cost of a spell.

Chest #5 is made of alchemically treated wood (2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 20; break DC 22) wrapped in demon skin with horn fittings, handles, and protrusions. This chest contains three shriveled githzerai heads with black gems wedged in their mouths and the symbol of Vlaakith carved into their foreheads. Each black gem holds a pinpoint of light: the trapped soul of a githzerai foe who tried and failed to destroy Vlaakith. Smashing a gem (hardness 5; hp 1) releases the trapped soul within, which then merges with the other souls bound to the Palace of Whispers. However, once the souls are released from the gems, PCs can restore the githzerai to life by casting *resurrection* spells on the heads (see **Development**, below).

Chest #6 is made of darkwood (2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 20; break DC 22), its curved lid set with a dozen glazed githzerai eyes. Inside rest six ornate crystal flasks (100 gp each) filled with *death's ichor* (see Chest #4, above). Each flask provides enough *death's ichor* to count for 1,000 XP when making an item or paying the XP cost of a spell.

Chest #7 is made of thick gold dragon hide (2 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 20; break DC 25) with iron handles and fittings. The chest contains a gold bracelet set with amethysts (4,200 gp), a silver goblet encrusted with eight sapphires (8,100 gp), a bejeweled platinum coronet (11,000 gp), a *periapt of wound closure*, and an emerald scarab pendant (actually a *scarab of death*), all nestled in a bed of 5,000 gp.

Chest #8 is made of iron (1 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 30; break DC 28) with clawed feet, iron handles, and a built-in lock shaped like a leering githyanki skull. Any living creature that touches the chest triggers a *chain lightning* trap. The chest contains a mummified githyanki hand with a magic ring on each digit: a *ring of counterspells*, a *ring of protection* +3, two *rings of friend shield* (matching pair), and a *ring of wizardry III*. The hand rests atop a display of 12 wands: a *wand of bull's strength* (32 charges), a *wand of cat's grace* (45 charges), a *wand of chaos hammer* (caster level 8th; 18 charges), a *wand of cure moderate wounds* (17 charges), a *wand of dimensional anchor* (24 charges), a *wand of dispel magic* (caster level 10th; 20 charges), a *wand of greater invisibility* (9 charges), a *wand of inflict critical wounds* (25 charges), a *wand of knock* (39 charges), a *wand of lightning bolt* (caster level 10th; 33 charges), a *wand of restoration* (6 charges), and a *wand of wall of ice* (47 charges).

↗ *Chain Lightning* Trap: CR 7; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*chain lightning*, 25th-level wizard, 20d6 electricity damage to target nearest center of trigger area plus 10d6 electricity damage to each of up to 20 secondary targets, Reflex save DC 27 half damage); Search DC 31; Disable Device DC 31.

Chest #9 consists of alchemically treated human skin stretched over a frame of bone ribs (1 in. thick; hardness 6; hp 10; break DC 17), with iron fittings and bone handles. It is filled with *residuum*, a translucent, ectoplasmic mucous that radiates overwhelming Transmutation magic when a *detect magic* spell is cast. The *residuum* is psychic residue collected from creatures Vlaakith has slain on the Astral Plane. The residuum absorbs into a nonintelligent magic item on contact, permanently imbuing it with sentience. Use the tables in the Intelligent Items section of the DUNGEON MASTER'S *Guide* to generate an item's alignment, mental ability scores, powers, and ego. The chest currently holds enough *residuum* to transform four magic items.

Chest #10 is draped with a *green slaad cloak* (see "New Magic Items"). The chest itself is carved from jade (2 in. thick; hardness 8; hp 40; break DC 26), and githyanki signs engraved on the lid spell out the following phrase in the Githyanki tongue: "Zr'kiil mah di r'ak'la Gith" ("In Gith's name, we shall conquer all"). The chest is worth 4,500 gp intact, and it holds 15 *+1 illithid slaying arrows* and 10 *+1 githzerai slaying arrows*.

Chest #11 is made of hardened gray spidersilk (1 in. thick; hardness 8; hp 15; break DC 22) and adorned with black spider eyes and legs. This chest contains 225 10-gp gems, 160 50-gp gems, 70 100-gp gems, 32 500-gp gems, and 12 1,000-gp gems. The total value of the gem trove is 42,250 gp.

Chest #12 is a simple wooden chest (1 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 15; break DC 18) covered with a 5-foot patch of purple mold grown from the putrefied corpse of an illithid. When a living creature touches the mold, it explodes with psychic spores that deal 4d6 points of temporary Intelligence damage (Will save DC 17 negates). The chest contains four flasks of the mold (which can be hurled as grenades) resting atop a bed of 1,600 pp.

↗ Cerebral Mold: CR 8; 5-ft. patch; affects all creatures within 10-ft. radius burst, 4d6 Int damage, Will save DC 14 negates; mold destroyed by sonic energy and rendered dormant in sunlight.

Creatures (EL 17+): The three obsidian pillars radiate strong Transmutation magic and are actually separated pieces of an elder black pudding held in *temporal stasis*. Touching one of the pillars deals 3d6 points of acid damage. When anyone other than Vlaakith disturbs the chests, the pillars collapse into corpulent mounds of black goo as the *temporal stasis* spells are *dispelled*. The black mass rolls over the edges of the binding circle inscribed on the floor, freeing the creature trapped inside it.

The creature trapped in the binding circle is Arythyzl, a marilith demon *polymorphed* into a dretch. An ally of the demon prince Graz'zt, General Arythyzl was called to the lich-queen's palace to update Vlaakith on the Blood War. In her dretch form, she claims to be Thrux, one of General Arythyzl's "worthless

underlings" with information on Arythyzl's plans to conquer the Astral Plane. If her ruse is foiled, Arythyzl assumes her true form and vows to slay Vlaakith if the PCs release her. She is lying, of course (see **Tactics**, below).

The binding circle prevents Arythyzl from using any of her spell-like abilities, including her ability to summon tanar'ri.

Arythyzl, Marilith: hp 242; AC 36 (–1 size, +4 Dex, +16 natural, +7 *+2 breastplate of sonic resistance*), touch 13, flat-footed 32; Atk +26 melee (2d6+10/19–20 plus 2d6 to opponent, plus 1d6 to wielder, *+1 vicious longsword*) or +24 melee (1d8+9, slam) or +24 melee (4d6+9, tail slap); Full Atk +26/+21/+16 melee (2d6+10/19–20 plus 2d6 to opponent, plus 1d6 to wielder, *+1 vicious longsword*) and +26 melee (2d6+5/19–20 plus 2d6 to opponent, plus 1d6 to wielder, 2 *+1 vicious longswords*) and +26 melee (2d6+5/17–20, 3 *+1 keen longswords*) and +22 melee (4d6+4, tail slap), or +24 melee (1d8+9, 6 slams) and +22 melee (4d6+4, tail slap); see *Monster Manual* 44 (demon, marilith) for other statistics.

Possessions: +2 breastplate of sonic resistance, 3 *+1 keen longswords*, 3 *+1 vicious longswords*.

Elder Black Pudding: hp 360 (120 per "pillar"); *Monster Manual* 201 (ooze).

Tactics: If set free, the marilith kills everything and anything in the room before attempting to summon 1d4 hezrou demon toadies, with whom she stages an assault on the lich-queen's palace. Arythyzl delights in wielding her *+1 vicious longswords*, each of which deals +2d6 points of damage to her enemy and 1d6 points of damage to the wielder. As cuts from the vicious blades bloody her scaly form, she cries out in horrible exultation.

The elder black pudding segments try to grapple and engulf prey. The pudding can't distinguish one meal from the next.

Development: Chest #5 contains the trapped souls of three githzerai assassins who perished trying to kill Vlaakith centuries ago. If their souls are released, PCs can bring these assassins back to life using *resurrection* spells, provided they have the githzerai heads and cast the spells within the palace (see the "Whispers of the Damned" section). If restored to life, the githzerai work with the PCs to complete their mission, fearlessly

opposing the lich-queen and her minions. However, they brook no long-term alliances with the PCs, regardless of their gestures of goodwill.

Drathac, Niil, and Zer'lym, Male Githzerai Rog10/Asn8 (3): CR 20; Medium Humanoid (extraplanar); HD 18d6+36; hp 116, 105, 99; Init +8; Spd 30 ft., fly 100 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 18; BAB +13/+8/+3; Grap +13; Atk +13 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +17 ranged; Full Atk +13/+8/+3 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike) or +17/+12/+7 ranged; SA death attack (DC 20), poison use, psionics, sneak attack +9d6, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., hide in plain sight, *inertial armor*, psionics, improved evasion, improved uncanny dodge, spells, trapfinding, trap sense +3, +4 save against poison; SR 23; AL LE; SV Fort +7, Ref +17, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills: Balance +6, Bluff +12, Disable Device +23, Diplomacy +4, Disguise +13, Escape Artist +16, Hide +25, Jump +2, Listen +13, Move Silently +25, Open Lock +19, Search +10, Sense Motive +13, Spot +13, Tumble +23. *Feats:* Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (short sword).

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*daze* (DC 10), *feather fall*, *shatter* (DC 12); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 17). Caster level 18th; save DC 10 + spell level.

***Inertial Armor* (Sp):** Githzerai can use psychic force to block an enemy's blows. This gives them a +4 armor bonus to AC as long as they remain conscious. This is the equivalent of a 1st-level spell.

Assassin Spells Known (4/4/3/1; base save DC = 12 + spell level): 1st—*detect poison*, *disguise self*, *obscuring mist*, *true strike*; 2nd—*cat's grace*, *invisibility*, *pass without trace*, *undetectable alignment*; 3rd—*deep slumber* (DC 15), *deeper darkness*, *false life*, *nondetection*; 4th—*dimension door*, *greater invisibility*, *locate creature*.

37. LIBRARY OF BONE (EL VARIES)

Vlaakith has cast a *forbiddance* spell on this room. Creatures that are not chaotic evil must speak the proper password ("mir'r'tal") to enter the room without taking damage.

> The walls of this dark, octagonal annex are lined with 30-foot-high, mortared stacks of bone scroll tubes stuffed with rolled pieces of parchment. Jutting up from the floor are three lecterns of red crystal shaped like dragon's claws. Atop each lectern rests an open book written on ancient sheets of flesh, its covers held fast by the lectern's crystalline claws.
>
> Floating in the middle of the room is a humanoid creature wrapped in shrouds of flickering black flame, its eyes aglow with cold hate. It points a twisted black staff at you accusingly.

The library's guardian (see **Creature**, below) attacks intruders on sight. Painted in blood on the 50-foot-high ceiling—noticeable only with a successful Search or Spot check (DC 31)—is the chamber's **Trap**, triggered by any living creature that disturbs the books on the lecterns. The three books and the various scrolls constitute the library's **Treasure**. A book can only be removed from its lectern by destroying or breaking the lectern (hardness 10; hp 90; break DC 40; immune to fire; SR 30) or by casting *animate objects* on the lectern and commanding it to release the book. Each lectern radiates a strong Abjuration aura.

Characters who inspect the library's floor and succeed at a Search check (DC 30) discover a secret compartment in the middle of the floor. The compartment contains a tiny, sealed metal box (hardness 20; hp 40; break DC 40) holding strips of parchment covered in arcane writings. This lich's phylactery does not belong to Vlaakith, and its destruction in no way threatens her.

Creature (EL 20): A kr'y'izoth guards the library.

Kr'y'izoth: hp 104; use the sample Kr'y'izoth statistics at the end of the adventure (described under the Kr'y'izoth template).

Tactics: Given time, the kr'y'izoth casts the following defensive spells in the listed order: *spell turning*, *stoneskin*, *shield*, *arcane sight*, and *fire shield* (warm shield version). At the beginning of combat, it casts *horrid wilting*. It saves its *mind fog* and *feeblemind* spells for an enemy spellcaster, maximized *magic missile* and *polar ray* on enemy fighter-types, and *greater dispel magic* for any character radiating several different magic auras. Its favorite tactic is to target a character with a *flesh to stone* spell, then destroy the petrified character in the same round using a quickened *disintegrate* spell. Its saves the *enervation* power of its *staff of necromancy* for clerics and particularly troublesome foes.

Trap (EL 6): Painted on the ceiling is an *ir'zharn symbol* that glows red whenever one of the lecterns or books is disturbed. The *symbol* may be activated repeatedly.

***Ir'zharn Symbol* Trap:** See the "Githyanki *Symbols*" section for details.

Treasure: Thousands of bone scroll tubes line the walls, and most of them hold scrolls. A thorough search of the library (taking roughly 2 hours) yields hundreds of scrolls chronicling major events in the history of the githyanki people, including their liberation from the mind flayers and various conflicts with the githzerai. These ancient chronicles are priceless to historians interested in such topics.

Vlaakith treasures the three books atop the crystal lecterns and would be very upset if one or all of them were stolen or destroyed.

The first book is titled *The Dread Codex of the Silver Void*—a bound spellbook with covers of treated illithid skin and pages made of stitched githzerai flesh. This tome has the properties of a *Boccob's blessed book* and contains 1,000 pages: an introductory page, 258 pages of 6th-level spells, 245 pages of 7th-level spells, 280 pages of 8th-level spells, and 216 pages of 9th-level spells. In total, the book contains all of the 6th- through 9th-level sorcerer/wizard spells in the *Player's Handbook*.

The second book is titled *The Book of Vile Darkness*—a hideous tome with rune-inscribed brimstone covers wrapped in demon-flesh. Its pages of flayed skin are covered with black script and diagrams penned in blood. The benefits and consequences for handling and reading the book are described in the DUNGEON MASTER'S *Guide*. In addition, and at your discretion, the book

may contain some or all of the spells described in the Magic chapter of the *Book of Vile Darkness* game product.

The third book is titled *Vlaakith's Malefic Libram*—a tome wrapped in death slaad skin, with Vlaakith's red symbol prominently displayed in the front cover. The book contains 666 fleshy pages, including an introductory page, 39 pages of 1st-level spells, 100 pages of 2nd-level spells, 126 pages of 3rd-level spells, 164 pages of 4th-level spells, and 215 pages of 5th-level spells. In total, the book contains all of the 1st- through 5th-level sorcerer/wizard spells in the *Player's Handbook*. The book ends with a 16-page doctrine on the creation and breeding of duthka'giths, where Vlaakith contemplates the transformation of all githyanki into the dragonlike creatures.

38. VLAAKITH'S RELIQUARY (EL VARIES)

This chamber has a *screen* spell cast upon it. The *screen* spell hides the portals in the alcoves, the dragon bones scattered on the floor, and all the room's occupants. Modify the boxed text below, as needed.

Characters hurled into the room by the ectoplasmic throat in area **35** land in the 10-foot-by-10-foot area directly in front of the gray mist door. Characters knocked prone must spend a move action standing up. In the meantime, the chamber's guardians move in for the kill (see **Creatures**, below).

When the PCs survey the room, read or paraphrase the following shaded text:

> Gargoyles resembling small obsidian dragons perch on ledges near the vaulted ceiling of this hall, which is illuminated by half-melted, blue-flamed candles placed in niches set into the walls at varying heights. Curtains made of interlocking bones and strips of flesh conceal a pair of 20-foot-wide, 30-foot-tall alcoves, and sickly green light seeps through the gaps in each curtain. Against one wall rests a table made of black skin stretched over a bone frame, upon which rests a cluster of gray eggs coated in mucous. As if these dressings weren't awful enough, the floor of the hall is littered with dragon bones.
>
> A 12-foot-tall mirror set into a 10-foot-wide obsidian frame seems to rise naturally from the floor opposite the mist-filled door. The frame is shaped like a yawning dragon's head, and the mirror fills its open maw. As you fix on your reflection, you feel a sinister force grasping for your soul.

Hundreds of would-be usurpers have challenged the lich-queen in this very chamber and paid a dire price. The main hall is illuminated by sixty *coldfire candles* (see "New Magic Items"). The bones covering the floor are the skeletal remains of two red dragons, which knit together and attack at their mistress's command (see **Creatures**, below).

The table bears seven unhatched duthka'gith eggs that the lich-queen is preparing to place in the duthka'gith hatchery (see areas **51**–**52**). The eggs won't hatch as long as they remain on the Astral Plane. Each egg is 8 inches tall, 6 inches wide, and quite fragile (1 hp).

The mirror facing the gray mist door is actually a *mirror of life trapping*, although Vlaakith also uses it for scrying. Any living creature standing in the 20-foot-by-10-foot section directly in front of the *mirror* must succeed at a Will save (DC 23) upon seeing its reflection or be taken bodily into the *mirror* and trapped within an extradimensional cell. The victim's clothing and equipment (including worn or held items) are left behind. The *mirror* currently holds eight prisoners and can accommodate seven more. Only Vlaakith knows the command words for releasing the prisoners, and she will not divulge this information under any circumstances. The *mirror* has been magically fortified and has a hardness of 20; however, even 1 point of damage is enough to destroy the mirror once its hardness is breached. Shattering the *mirror* releases trapped PCs and its other prisoners (see **Development**, below).

Behind the flesh-and-bone curtains are two alcoves, each of which contains a two-way portal (treat as a *gate* spell cast by a 25th-level wizard for *dispelling* purposes). Each portal looks like an oval doorway covered with a thick veil of luminous, translucent ectoplasm that allows only a vague impression of what lies beyond. Strands of energy occasionally spring from the portals; though cloying, these strands are harmless. The portals are set into obsidian archways adorned with ominous protrusions resembling horns and fangs. One portal leads to area **39** deep inside the One in the Void, the other to area **50** on the Prime Material Plane.

Creatures (EL 24, 28+ if Vlaakith is present): Vlaakith retreats to this chamber if she is driven from area **7** or elsewhere, and here she makes her final stand. The palace whispers are louder in this room when the lich-queen is present (see "Whispers of the Damned" for details). Vlaakith stands behind the *mirror of life trapping*, stepping out from behind it when she hears intruders falling through the gray mist door.

Lurking in the curtained alcove to the left of the *mirror* and guarding the *gate* leading to area **39** are two tl'a'ikiths. Unless Vlaakith commands them to join the battle, they remain at their post, although they may chase intruders through the portal.

Lurking in the curtained alcove to the right of the *mirror* and guarding the *gate* to area **50** are two kr'y'izoths. They emerge from the alcove to assist Vlaakith as soon as intruders appear. If Vlaakith is not present, they emerge to destroy any interlopers not drawn into the mirror.

As a free action, Vlaakith can silently command the dragon bones on the floor to knit together, forming a pair of skeletal red dragons. If Vlaakith is not present, the bones remain inanimate. Each skeletal dragon takes 1 round to form.

- **Vlaakith:** hp 180; see the "Vlaakith the Lich-Queen" section for statistics, possessions, and tactics.
- **Kr'y'izoths (2):** hp 104 each; use the sample Kr'y'izoth statistics at the end of the adventure (described under the Kr'y'izoth template).
- **Tl'a'ikiths (2):** hp 104 each; use the sample Tl'a'ikith statistics at the end of the adventure (described under the Tl'a'ikith template).

Skeletal Adult Red Dragons (2): CR 8; Huge Undead; HD 22d12+22; hp 188 each; Init +4; Spd 40 ft.; AC 12, touch 8, flat-footed 12; BAB +11; Grap +30; Atk +20 melee (2d8+11, bite); Full Atk +20 melee (2d8+11, bite) and +15 melee (2d6+5, 2 claws) and +15 melee (2d6+16, tail slap); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA frightful presence; SQ blindsense 60 ft., damage reduction 10/bludgeoning magic, darkvision 600 ft., immune to cold and fire, keen senses, undead traits; SR 25; AL CE; SV Fort +13, Ref +13, Will +13; Str 33, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 16.

Feats: Improved Initiative.

Frightful Presence (Ex): This ability comes into play whenever the skeletal dragon attacks, charges, or flies overhead. Non-dragons with fewer Hit Dice than the dragon, that can see the dragon, and that are within 180 feet of the dragon must succeed at a Will save (DC 24) or succumb to the effects of the dragon's frightful presence. On a failure, creatures with 4 or fewer Hit Dice become panicked for 4d6 rounds and those with 5 or more Hit Dice are shaken for 4d6 rounds.

See the appendix in "Old Embers Never Die" elsewhere in this issue for more information on the skeletal dragon template.

Tactics: Vlaakith's tactics are described in the "Vlaakith the Lich-Queen" section. The kr'y'izoths remain near the lich-queen, healing her with their necromantic magic while she casts spells at intruders. The skeletal dragons aren't terribly effective and mainly serve to draw attacks.

Development: If Vlaakith is destroyed, her body turns to dust while her spirit is instantaneously transported to her phylactery in area **58**. Thanks to a carefully phrased *wish* spell, Vlaakith's items (including her crown and scepter) vanish as well, *teleported* into the black sarcophagus that holds her phylactery (see area **49** for details).

If the *mirror of life trapping* is destroyed, all of the prisoners contained within are released in an explosion of reflective glass shards. In addition to any trapped PCs, the mirror contains the following creatures: a nalfeshnee demon named Fekrex and two of his succubi concubines, an astral deva named Gethan, three maelephants deliberately placed in the *mirror* as guardians, and an elven arcane archer named Valciron Stormbow. The demons seek to leave the palace as quickly as possible but stick around long enough to assault the astral deva, which they abhor. Despite being weaponless, Gethan shows the devils no quarter, and if he survives, he joins the PCs' against Vlaakith. The maelephants are loyal to the lich-queen and attack the other *mirror* escapees at random. Valciron, an arrogant arcane archer hailing from a world unknown to the PCs, knows that Vlaakith tortured and killed his former comrades (they are among the corpses impaled on the walls of the lich-queen's tormentory, in area **29**). Bereft of equipment, he grabs whatever weapon is convenient before turning his attention to slaying the lich-queen and her minions, siding with the PCs if they share similar purpose.

Fekrex, Nalfeshnee: hp 185; *Monster Manual* 45 (demon, nalfeshnee).

Myzzri and Siffilys, Succubi: hp 78 each; *Monster Manual* 47 (demon, succubus).

Gethan, Astral Deva: hp 124; *Monster Manual* 11 (angel, astral deva).

Maelephants (3): hp 88 each; *Fiend Folio* 120. If you lack access to the *Fiend Folio*, replace the maelephants with two fire giants, both of which have the same CR.

Valciron Stormbow, Male Elf Ftr8/Sor1/Arc7: CR 16; Medium Humanoid (elf, extraplanar); HD 8d10+16 plus 1d4+2 plus 7d8+14; hp 119; Init +3; Spd 30 ft., fly 100 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 10; BAB +15/+10/+5; Grap +18; Atk +20 melee (1d8+8/19–20, *+2 two-bladed sword**) or +23 ranged (1d8+7/×3 plus 1d6 electricity, *+1 composite shock longbow** [+3 Str] with *+4 arrow**); Full Atk +19/+14/+9 melee (1d8+7/19–20, *+2 two-bladed sword**) and +18/+13 melee (1d8+4/19–20, *+1 two-bladed sword**) or +21/+21/+16/+11 ranged (1d8+7/×3 plus 1d6 electricity, *+1 composite shock longbow** [+3 Str] with *+4 arrow* and Rapid Shot); SA enhance arrow +4, *imbue arrow*, *phase arrow* 1/day, *seeker arrow* 1/day, spells; SQ elven traits, spells; AL CG; SV Fort +13, Ref +10, Will +7; Str 17, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 13.

*Valciron's weapons, armor, and other equipment are stored in area **20**.

Skills: Climb +6, Concentration +4, Hide +7, Intimidate +5, Jump +7, Listen +7, Move Silently +7, Ride +17, Search +2, Spot +7, Survival +5, Use Rope +7. *Feats:* Exotic Weapon Proficiency (two-bladed sword), Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Scribe Scroll, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (longbow), Weapon Focus (two-bladed sword), Weapon Specialization (two-bladed sword).

Sorcerer Spells Prepared (5/4; save DC = 10 + spell level): 0—*acid splash, detect magic, flare, resistance*; 1st—*expeditious retreat, true strike*.

HEART OF THE DEAD GOD (AREAS 39–49)

This network of caves was once the still-beating heart of the One in the Void, the long-dead god upon which Tu'narath is now built. The dread whispers that echo through the halls of the lich-queen's palace are not present here, nor is the *unhallow* effect. In fact, the entire cave network radiates a faint, residual aura of good when a *detect good* spell is cast.

Unknown to all githyanki except Vlaakith herself, the One in the Void was once a powerful good-aligned deity, and despite being dead, divine remnants of its goodness still linger within these caves. Although Vlaakith finds the caves abhorrent, she believes that she can capture the dead god's "divine spark" to attain godhood, and that the secret to capturing this divine spark lies within the dead god's heart. She also knows that her evil rivals would never think to look for her phylactery here.

Cave Features: All of the caves are made of naturally formed dark gray stone covered with a thin crystalline lattice, much like a geode. Pale, wispy-white ectoplasm fills every cave. The ectoplasm is ephemeral and harmless, but its milky strands and gossamer draperies lend the caves an otherworldly quality. The ectoplasm is sensitive to psionic energy and is naturally pushed out of any square occupied by a creature that manifests a psionic

power or has innate psionic spell-like abilities (such as githyanki and githzerai).

Unless otherwise noted, all passages are 20 feet high and all caves are 50 feet high.

39. ARRIVAL NODE

You stand in a 30-foot-high cave filled with thin veils and filaments of milky-white energy. These translucent curtains and gossamer strands shift as though caught in a draft, yet there is none. This place provides a stark and welcome contrast to the dark gloom of the lich-queen's palace. In fact, you feel strangely comfortable here, although you're not sure why.

A hollowed-out column of roughly hewn gray rock houses the two-way portal leading back to the lich-queen's reliquary (see area 38). Other than the column, the portal, and the psionic ectoplasm, the cave is empty. The ectoplasmic veils and filaments aren't thick enough here to provide concealment.

40. EMOTION NODULE: HOPE

The strands of ectoplasm thicken here, providing concealment (20% miss chance) to any creature more than 10 feet away. The cave, though empty, holds emotional residue left by the passing of the dead god. Any living creature that spends more than 1 round here feels a tremendous sense of hope about the future and gains the benefits of a *good hope* spell (caster level 20th; Will save DC 23 negates). The effects last for as long as the creature remains in the cave, plus an additional 20 minutes after leaving the cave.

41. CALCIFYING CAVE (EL 18)

The passage widens, but a thickening web of ghostly veils and filaments greatly reduces visibility. The floor grows more uneven as well. A few paces farther and you realize that some of the floor's rocky outcroppings are actually petrified githyanki lying on the cavern floor, their calcified faces frozen in terror.

The web of ectoplasmic energy poses no danger, although the reduced visibility provides concealment (20% miss chance) to any creature more than 10 feet away. The petrified githyanki are all that remain of several low-ranking members of Ch'r'ai sent here as tribute to the undead **Creatures** that call this area home. They have no equipment or salvageable items of value.

Creatures: Two gravecrawlers lurk here, hidden beneath the stone floor.

Gravecrawlers (2): hp 162 each; *Monster Manual II* 118. If you do not have access to the *Monster Manual II*, substitute a quartet of nalfeshnee demons (*Monster Manual* 45), one of whom has *eyes of petrification* (Dungeon Master's *Guide* 256), for the gravecrawlers.

Tactics: When they sense one or more creatures moving toward the middle of the cave, the gravecrawlers burrow up into the cave to catch the intruders in their calcifying auras. Creatures caught in both auras must make saving throws against each aura separately.

42. HEALING TORUS

The tunnel widens to form a cave. However, the veils and strands of ectoplasm are so thick that vision is obscured beyond 10 feet. Soft white light filters down from somewhere high above.

The ectoplasmic veils and strands provide concealment (50% miss chance) to any creature more than 10 feet away. The soft light emanates from a 3-foot-diameter torus of positive energy hovering 30 feet above the floor (20 feet below the ceiling). Any living creature that flies up and touches the torus instantly heals 10d6 points of damage. However, too much positive

energy can be dangerous, and if the torus heals more damage than the creature has taken, the excess healing energy actually causes that much damage instead. For example, if a paladin is healed for 30 points but only needed 10 points of healing, he would be fully healed before taking 20 points of damage from the positive energy "feedback."

An undead creature that touches the torus takes 10d6 points of damage from the positive energy.

The torus of light cannot be moved or *dispelled*.

43. BECKONING LIGHT

White wisps of ectoplasm fill this cave, beckoning you to enter. A tiny mote of white light floats near the mouth of the widest tunnel leading from this cave, dances in the air briefly, and disappears down the passage. Wispy filaments vainly try to pull you in the direction of the light.

The mote of light flies down the tunnel leading to area 44, staying ahead of pursuers. Apart from the pervasive ectoplasmic draperies and filaments, the cave is empty. The ectoplasmic energy provides concealment (20% miss chance) to any creature more than 10 feet away.

44. DIVINE BREATH

The tunnel from area 43 slopes down gradually to this cave.

This cave holds a forest of crystal stalagmites and stalactites strung with ephemeral wisps of ectoplasm. A tiny mote of white light weaves playfully among the stalagmites, then disappears down a narrow tunnel at the back of the cave that seems free of ectoplasmic energy.

The ectoplasmic webbing that fills this cave provides concealment (20% miss chance) to any creature more than 10 feet away. Large and smaller creatures can navigate through the forest of rock formations with ease, however. If a good-aligned PC follows the mote of light down the tunnel, read or paraphrase the following:

The tunnel narrows to a dead end after 60 feet, and the white light is nowhere to be seen. Suddenly, you feel a presence waft through your mind, as invigorating as a breath of cool air.

Only good-aligned PCs sense the psychic wind passing through them. The wind carries the dying thoughts of the ancient god upon whom the githyanki built their capital, and these sublime revelations provide the following permanent benefits to those who can sense them:

- A +1 bonus to Wisdom.
- A +2 insight bonus on initiative checks.
- A +4 insight bonus on saving throws against death spells and effects.

A creature may only gain these benefits once and cannot hear the dead god's revelations a second time.

45. EMOTION NODULE: SORROW

The ectoplasmic veils are quite dense here, providing concealment (20% miss chance) to any creature more than 10 feet away. The cave, though empty, holds emotional residue left by the passing of the dead god. Any living creature that spends more than 1 round feels a tremendous sense of sorrow and suffers the effects of a *crushing despair* spell (caster level 20th; Will save DC 23 negates). The effects last as long as the creature remains in the cave, plus an additional 20 minutes after leaving the cave.

46. DESSAKRUL'S MAW (EL 22)

The tunnel opens into an enormous, 30-foot-high cavern with three other tunnels branching from it. The cave floor slopes down to a 30-foot-diameter gaping pit in the middle of the cave. A low growl emanates from somewhere deep within the pit, which looks more like a stony maw than a natural rock formation. Like the cave, the pit is criss-crossed with wispy strands of ectoplasm.

PCs who succeed at a Listen check (DC 20) recognize that the "low growl" is actually a deep snore. The pit descends 200 feet, and curled up at the bottom of the shaft is a sleeping Creature. It rests atop a mound of bones—the remains of past victims—and its Treasure. The ectoplasm that lingers in this cave provides some concealment (20% miss chance) to creatures more than 20 feet away.

Creature: Vlaakith entrusts a two-headed red dragon named Dessakrul to defend the cave network and protect her phylactery (in area 49). However, the caves see very few intruders, and Dessakrul spends most of his time asleep at the bottom of his pit. A silent *alarm* spell awakens him when the lich-queen's phylactery is disturbed (see area 49 for details). The dragon also awakens if he hears intruders in his cave; assume the sleeping dragon "takes 0" on his Listen checks (his Listen check result while asleep is 42).

Dessakrul, Two-headed Male Old Red Dragon: CR 22; Gargantuan Dragon (extraplanar, fire); HD 30d12+240; hp 476; Init +4; Spd 40 ft., fly 200 ft. (clumsy), fly 200 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 34, touch 6, flat-footed 34; BAB +28; Grap +52; Atk +37 melee (4d6+12, bite) or +24 ranged (ranged touch); Full Atk +37 melee (4d6+12, bite) and +37 melee (4d6+6, bite) and +37 melee (2d8+6, 2 claws) and +36 melee (2d6+6, 2 wings) and +36 melee (2d8+18, tail slap) or +24 ranged (ranged touch); Space/Reach 20 ft./15 ft.; SA breath weapon, crush 4d6+18, frightful presence, spell-like abilities, tail sweep 2d6+18; SQ blindsense, damage reduction 10/magic, darkvision 800 ft., fire subtype, immune to *sleep* and paralysis, keen senses; SR 24; AL CE; SV Fort +23, Ref +16, Will +21; Str 35, Dex 10, Con 27, Int 20, Wis 21, Cha 20.

Skills: Bluff +38, Climb +45, Concentration +41, Diplomacy +42, Intimidate +40, Knowledge (arcana) +38, Listen +42, Move Silently +33, Search +40, Sense Motive +38, Spot +42. *Feats:* Alertness, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Improved Multiattack, Multiattack, Power Attack, Snatch, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (claw).

Breath Weapon (Su): Every 1d4 rounds, both of Dessakrul's heads can breathe a 60-ft, cone-shaped burst of fire, dealing 16d10 points of fire damage (Reflex save DC 30 for half). Both breath weapons activate on the same round but can aim in different directions.

Crush (Ex): Dessakrul can, if it is flying or jumping, land on opponents as a standard action, using its whole body to crush them. Crush attacks are effective only against opponents three or more size categories smaller than the dragon (although he can attempt normal overrun or grapple attacks against larger opponents). A crush attack affects as many creatures as can fit under the dragon's body. Creatures in the affected area must succeed at a Reflex save (DC 30) or be pinned, automatically taking bludgeoning damage during the next round unless Dessakrul moves off them. If the dragon chooses to maintain the pin, treat it as a normal grapple attack. Pinned opponents take crush damage each round if they don't escape.

Fire Subtype (Ex): Immune to fire. The dragon takes half again as much (+50%) damage as normal from cold, regardless of whether a saving throw is allowed, or if the save is a success or failure.

Frightful Presence (Ex): This ability comes into play whenever the dragon attacks, charges, or flies overhead. Non-dragons with fewer Hit Dice than the dragon, that can see the dragon, and that are within 240 feet of the dragon must succeed at a Will save (DC 30) or succumb to the effects of the dragon's frightful presence. On a failure, creatures with 4 or fewer Hit Dice become panicked for 4d6 rounds and those with 5 or more Hit Dice are shaken for 4d6 rounds.

Tail Sweep (Ex): As a standard action, Dessakrul can sweep its tail in a 30-foot-diameter half circle, centered on its rear, affecting creatures four or more size categories smaller than himself. Affected creatures that succeed at a Reflex save (DC 30) take half damage.

Spell-like Abilities: 3/day—*suggestion* (DC 18); 8/day—*locate object*. Caster level 11th; save DC 20 + spell level.

Spells Known (6/8/7/7/7/5; base save DC = 15 + spell level): 0—*arcane mark, daze, detect magic, ghost sound, mage hand, mending, open/close, read magic, resistance;* 1st—*alarm, comprehend languages, endure elements, expeditious retreat, ray of enfeeblement;* 2nd—*bear's endurance, bull's strength, cat's grace, detect thoughts, Melf's acid arrow;* 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance, haste, magic circle against good, protection from energy;* 4th—*crushing despair, greater invisibility, scrying;* 5th—*sending, teleport.*

Dessakrul has the Multiheaded Creature template from *Savage Species*. See that product for more information. The statistics provided above are sufficient to run the encounter, though.

Tactics: Dessakrul casts *sending* to warn Vlaakith that intruders are in the caves. (If she has not been destroyed, the lich-queen *teleports* to area **49** with two tl'a'ikiths and two kr'y'izoths, either from area **7** or area **38**.) As he soars up the pit, he begins casting the following spells on himself, in the following order: *greater invisibility, bear's endurance, bull's strength, haste, protection from energy* (cold), and *magic circle against good*. If unable to cast all of these spells before entering combat, he will continue to cast quickened spells on himself while engaging foes in melee or blasting them with his breath weapons. Apart from slaying all intruders, Dessakrul's primary goal is to keep them from finding and destroying the lich-queen's phylactery.

Treasure: Dessakrul's hoard lies buried among the bones at the bottom of the pit. PCs searching the dragon's lair find 8 500-gp

gems, 4 1,000-gp gems, 4 jade six-sided dice (400 gp each), a double-stemmed pipe carved from the femur of a yeth hound (500 gp), a golden figurine of the goddess Yondalla (500 gp), a brass trumpet with detailed acid-etching (700 gp), a mithral-inlaid wooden mug set with citrines (1,500 gp), an empty ivory scroll tube set with emerald chips (2,300 gp), a platinum scepter topped with a sculpted amethyst illithid head (4,000 gp), a brightly enameled triptych depicting scenes of devils and demons at war (4,500 gp), a small crystal box etched with soaring dragons (5,200 gp), a mithral spider web pendant set with a black pearl spider (6,000 gp), a *rod of wonder*, a *+3/+3 dire flail*, a *+2 chain shirt of fire resistance*, a *+5 heavy steel shield*, a *wand of restoration* (33 charges), a *wand of arcane eye* (26 charges), and a *cube of frost resistance*.

47. EMOTION NODULE: FEAR

The veils and filaments of ectoplasm are thin here, providing no concealment. The cave, though empty, holds emotional residue left by the passing of the dead god. Any living creature that spends more than 1 round here is besieged by feelings of dread and suffers the effects of a *fear* spell (caster level 20th; Will save DC 23 negates). The effects last for as long as the creature remains in the cave, plus an additional 20 rounds after leaving the cave.

48. DUTHKA'GITH GUARDS (EL 18)

The veils and strands of ectoplasm aren't thick enough in this cave to provide concealment.

Creatures: Vlaakith has stationed two duthka'giths here to keep intruders from reaching her phylactery. The guards continuously use *clairaudience/clairvoyance* to watch the portal (in area **39**), so they cannot be surprised.

Jez'k'nir and Sverryl, Male Duthka'gith Ftr12: hp 131, 122; see area **3** for complete statistics possessions. Sverryl also carries a *wand of greater invisibility* (19 charges).

Tactics: As soon as they become aware of intruders, they make themselves invisible (using Sverryl's wand) and ready shots with their composite longbows. They are not afraid to withdraw to a more tactically advantageous location using their *dimension door* ability.

49. VLAAKITH'S PHYLACTERY (EL 9+)

Vlaakith has cast a *forbiddance* spell on this cave. Creatures that are not chaotic evil must speak the proper password ("zac'r'lev") to enter the room without taking damage.

> Wispy filaments of ectoplasm create a web stretching from wall to wall, floor to ceiling. However, the gossamer strands are not so close that they block passage into the cave. Rising up from the floor is a dazzling, opaque hemisphere of prismatic light. Bits of ectoplasm occasionally touch the sphere, bursting into flame briefly before vaporizing.

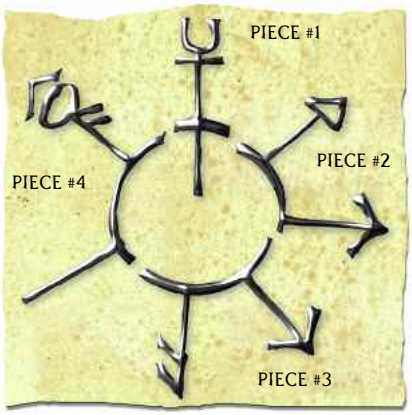
The dazzling hemisphere of light is a *permanent prismatic sphere* cast by Vlaakith. Any creature with less than 8 HD that comes within 20 feet of the sphere is blinded for 2d4×10 minutes. If the PCs successfully *dispel* the *prismatic sphere* or enter the area enclosed within the *sphere*, read or paraphrase the following:

> Within the radiant hemisphere rests a sarcophagus carved from polished black crystal. The sarcophagus has no remarkable features except for a 1-foot-diameter circular symbol carved into its top.

The sarcophagus belongs to Vlaakith, and her symbol is neatly carved into the lid. The sarcophagus radiates an *antipathy* spell (Will save DC 29 partial) that prevents lawful good creatures from approaching it. Seemingly crafted from a solid block of crystal, it cannot be opened or budged, and it is impervious to all spells and physical attacks. Any attempt to peer inside the sarcophagus using magic also fails.

The lich-queen can open the sarcophagus by touching it; otherwise, opening the sarcophagus requires a special four-piece key made out of Astral driftmetal and shaped like Vlaakith's symbol (see the accompanying Vlaakith's Symbol diagram). The four pieces of the key are located in areas **7**, **13**, **20**, and **28**, radiate strong Transmutation auras, and fuse together when reunited. When the key is properly assembled and placed in the lid's graven indentation, a seam magically appears in the sarcophagus, forming a heavy lid that rises 5 feet in the air (as if lifted by a *levitate* spell, although the effect cannot be dispelled). Placing the assembled key in the lid also triggers a **Trap**.

If Vlaakith's corporeal form has not been destroyed, the hollow interior of the sarcophagus is empty except for a small and nigh-impregnable adamantine box (hardness 20; hp 40; break DC 40). Vlaakith has placed a *sequester* spell on the box that renders it undetectable to Divination spells and invisible to any form of sight or seeing (as the *invisibility* spell). However, a thorough tactile search of the sarcophagus (DC 25 Search check) locates the *sequestered* box. Touching or otherwise disturbing the box arouses Dessakrul in area **46** (see **Development**). The box serves as Vlaakith's phylactery and contains bits of her flesh with arcane sigils and runes scribed on them. If the phylactery is destroyed, Vlaakith cannot reform after her corporeal body is destroyed and is forever gone (see "Death to Vlaakith!").



SYMBOL OF VLAAKITH

If Vlaakith's corporeal form has been destroyed, the sarcophagus holds all of the lich's possessions in addition to her phylactery. These items include her *crown of corruption* and the *scepter of Ephelomon*. The sarcophagus also contains a ghostly yet harmless phantom of the slowly reforming lich-queen. Even though time does not pass on the Astral Plane, it takes the equivalent of 1d10 days for Vlaakith to reform after her corporeal body has been destroyed.

Trap: When the four-part key shaped like Vlaakith's symbol is placed in the lid of the sarcophagus, the key flashes briefly, activating a *symbol of death* spell. Removing and then reinserting the key activates the trap again.

***Vlaakith Symbol* Trap:** See the "Githyanki *Symbols*" section for details.

Development: If anyone other than Vlaakith touches her phylactery, a silent *alarm* spell alerts Dessakrul, the two-head dragon in area **46**. Fearing the destruction of his dark mistress, Dessakrul hurriedly emerges from his lair and makes his way down the tunnel connecting his lair to this cave. He brings fiery death (and the duthka'giths in area **48**, if they're still alive) to anyone who would dare violate Vlaakith's tomb.

DUTHKA'GITH HATCHERY (AREAS 50–56)

One of the portals in Vlaakith's reliquary (area **38**) leads to a small fortress somewhere on the Material Plane, where time proceeds apace and the lich-queen's duthka'gith soldiers are born and raised. This stronghold may be located anywhere, including somewhere on the PCs' homeworld. Whatever the location, it should be secluded. Like Susurrus, the duthka'gith hatchery is carved from obsidian; however, no whispers emanate from its walls and it has no magic wards to speak of. Since the stronghold does not reside on the Astral Plane, its occupants can't fly by mental thought or cast quickened spells.

The duthka'gith hatchery has no exits to the outside world except a few narrow arrow slits barely wide enough for a Small creature to squeeze through. The interior is unpleasantly warm, thanks mainly to the presence of an elder blackfire elemental named Synfernal (see area **51**).

Hatchery Features: All rooms in the hatchery are 30 feet tall. Doors are made of 2-inch-thick bronze (hardness 9; hp 40; break DC 30) and adorned with fiery motifs. They bear no locks and are warm to the touch. The interior of the structure is unlit, as the duthka'gith rely on darkvision to get around.

50. ARRIVAL POINT

The portal leading to Vlaakith's reliquary on the Astral Plane (area **38**) sheds barely enough light to illuminate this chamber. Read or paraphrase the following when the PCs first arrive:

> You stand in a dimly lit, unpleasantly warm chamber with polished obsidian walls and obsidian tile floors. The sinister whispers are gone, replaced by a dull roar originating from beyond a pair of bronze doors set into the far wall. Two spiral staircases curl up into darkness.

Both staircases ascend 30 feet to area **53**. The bronze doors (leading to area **51**) feel hot to the touch and open into this room.

Development: Loud noises in this room automatically alert the duthka'gith guards in area **53** who, in turn, alert the duthka'giths in areas **54** and **55**.

51. SYNFERNAL (EL 15)

> This 60-foot-high chamber is blisteringly hot and filled with a roaring cylinder of searing black flame 30 feet tall and 15 feet in diameter. Within the black fire, two red eyes smolder like hot coals. Archways pierce every wall, and an obsidian balcony, its ornate stone railing carved like a row of miniature black dragons, hangs 30 feet overhead.

Vlaakith has entrusted an elder blackfire elemental named Synfernal to heat the duthka'gith egg hatcheries (see area **52**). The room's blistering heat deals 1d6 points of subdual damage per round to any creature not protected against fire.

Creature: Synfernal is bound to this room and has just enough reach to catch creatures standing on the upper balcony. When intruders enter the room, it hisses in Ignan, "You dare visit harm upon the children of Vlaakith? Your souls will burn for eternity!" It then attacks, ignoring any attempts at negotiation.

Synfernal, Elder Blackfire Elemental: CR 15; hp 253; Atk +26 melee (2d8+9 plus 2d8 fire plus 1d4 negative levels, slam); Full Atk +26 melee (2d8+9 plus 2d8 fire plus 1d4 negative levels, 2 slams); SA burn, energy drain; see *Monster Manual* 99 (fire elemental, elder) for other statistics.

Energy Drain (Su): A living creature hit by Synfernal's slam attack gains 1d4 negative levels. For each negative level it deals, the elemental heals 5 hit points of damage.

Development: A battle here alerts all of the duthka'gith guards in the stronghold, who come running. They arrive in groups (by area) every 2 rounds until all are present.

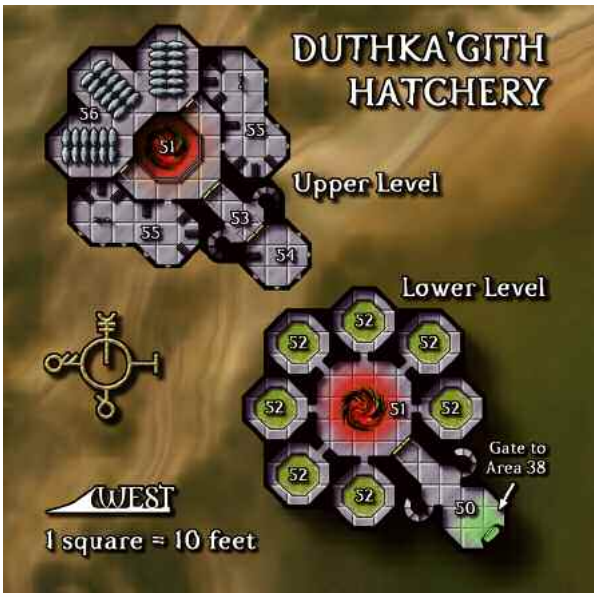
52. EGG HATCHERY

> A sunken pool of boiling mucous fills this octagonal room with a horrid stench. Partially immersed in the 1-foot-deep pool are dozens of small gray eggs covered with red speckles. A 5-foot-wide stone ledge surrounds the pool.

The boiling mucous deals 1d6 points of fire damage on contact. Each pool contains 10d6 duthka'gith eggs. None of the eggs are ready to hatch, but many of them will hatch within a month. Each egg is 8 inches tall, 6 inches wide, and quite fragile (1 hp).

53. GUARDED HALL (EL 18)

Two sets of doors open into this hall, and the doors leading to area **51** are hot to the touch.



Creatures: Four duthka'giths stand guard here—two guards flank each set of double doors.

Male and Female Githyanki Duthka'gith Ftr8 (4): hp 88, 82, 71, 67; see area **17** for complete statistics.

Tactics: If the guards hear intruders in area **50**, one of the guards alerts the duthka'gith captain (in area **54**) while another alerts Synfernal (in area **51**) and the other duthka'gith guards in the barracks (area **55**). The other two guards move to the top of the spiral staircases, watching and listening for trouble from below.

Development: Once the captain and the other guards are alerted, the entire duthka'gith garrison begins sweeping through the stronghold in search of intruders to kill and devour.

54. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS (EL 18)

An obsidian slab juts from one wall of this octagonal room, forming a crude bed. A large bronzewood chest with iron fittings rests nearby, and two iron cages hang from the ceiling by iron chains. One of the cages contains a soot-stained female dwarf with an eyepatch; the other holds a trio of halflings curled up in fetal positions.

The dwarf and the halflings were captured from distant settlements and brought to the stronghold as food. The duthka'gith captain (see **Creatures**, below) carries the keys to their iron cages.

Reinforced Iron Cages (2): 1-in.-thick bars; Hardness 10; hp 60; break DC 33; Open Lock DC 25.

Creatures: Unless she has been alerted to the arrival of intruders, the duthka'gith captain is here, sharpening her fangs with an iron file and tormenting her prisoners by telling them how she intends to flay them before serving them up to her soldiers. Ur'yel is a cruel tyrant who enjoys nothing more than a good hunt. She was one of the first duthka'gith the lich-queen created, and she enjoys the prestige of commanding such an important post.

The prisoners wear tattered rags. The dwarf, Corundra Hammerhelm, is the daughter of a dwarven smith. She lost her right eye to a splinter of hot metal while working in her father's forge a couple years ago. The halflings were taken from a distant shire; Ur'yel cast *feeblemind* spells on them to quell their incessant sobbing, and they are no longer able to communicate effectively.

Captain Ur'yel, Female Duthka'gith Wiz14: hp 88; see Captain Zr'kiil's information in area **5** for statistics.

Spells Prepared (4/5/5/5/5/3/3/2; base save DC = 14 + spell level, 15 + spell level for Enchantment spells, 16 + spell level for Evocation spells): 0—*acid splash, detect magic, open/close, read magic;* 1st—*magic missile* ×3, *ray of enfeeblement, shield;* 2nd—*bear's endurance, detect thoughts, resist energy, scorching ray, see invisibility;* 3rd—*displacement, hold person**, *lightning bolt*†, *slow, suggestion**; 4th—*charm monster**, *enervation,* maximized *magic missile* ×2, *wall of fire*†; 5th—*cone of cold*†, *dominate person**, *feeblemind**; 6th—*chain lightning**, *disintegrate, greater dispel magic;* 7th—*finger of death,* maximized *fireball**.

*Enchantment spell. The base save DC for these spells is 15 + spell level.

†Evocation spell. The base save DC for these spells is 16 + spell level.

Corundra Hammerhelm, Female Dwarf War1: hp 5; *Monster Manual* 91.

Tylo Booginsfoot, Miri Silverwillow, and Nert Thistletoe, *Feebleminded* Male and Female Halfling War1: hp 5 each; *Monster Manual* 149.

Tactics: Before entering battle, Ur'yel casts *bear's endurance* and *displacement* on herself. In battle, she stays to the rear and casts *feeblemind* and *disintegrate* on enemy spellcasters, *dominate person* and *ray of enfeeblement* on enemy fighter-types, *slow* on *hasted* foes, *greater dispel magic* on an unusually resilient opponent, and *chain lightning* and maximized *fireball* on larger groups of foes. She uses *wall of fire* to cut off her enemies' escape.

55. BARRACKS (EL 20)

Seven bed-shaped slabs of obsidian jut from the walls of this oddly shaped room. Sunlight filters in through arrow slits in some of the walls, and the floor is strewn with bones. An iron ladder ascends to a wooden trapdoor in the ceiling.

Each of these rooms contains seven stone beds, and the bones on the floor belong to various creatures that the duthka'giths have devoured (mostly humanoid captives and animals from the surrounding countryside). The arrow slits afford a limited view of the surrounding landscape. The trapdoor in the ceiling opens onto the flat roof of the stronghold, which is enclosed by 4-foot-tall crenelated battlements. From the roof, creatures are afforded a full view of the surrounding wilderness (whatever it might be).

Despite their draconic ancestry, the duthka'giths harbor no lust for treasure (their loyalty to Vlaakith is enough). Consequently, these barracks contain no objects of value.

Creatures (EL 20 per room): Each room normally contains five duthka'giths—ten in all. The four unused beds belong to the on-duty guards in area 53.

Male and Female Githyanki Duthka'gith Ftr8 (5 per room): hp 85, 85, 80, 73, 66; see area 17 for complete statistics.

56. DUTHKA'GITH NURSERY

This oddly shaped chamber contains six rows of crystalline pods. Within several of the translucent pods you see what appears to be a sleeping githyanki with glistening red scales. Some are obviously infants and young children, while others are almost full-grown specimens. About half of the pods are empty.

Each pod (hardness 5; hp 15; break DC 20) radiates strong Transmutation magic and is designed to accelerate the growth of the duthka'gith hatchling placed within it. A dull hum keeps the pod's inhabitant asleep as it is fed nutrients that stimulate the growth of muscles, tissues, and bone. Touching a crystalline pod causes part of its oblong shell to retract, exposing the sleeping duthka'gith within. The pods' magic cannot be *dispelled*, but a *Mordenkainen's disjunction* spell cast on the pods destroys their magic, turning them into inert crystal coffins.

The sleeping duthka'giths can be killed with coup de grace attacks and are worth no experience points. A live duthka'gith removed from its pod awakens in 1d10 rounds (or sooner if deliberately aroused from its deep slumber). It has no martial training and has statistics similar to a nonclassed githyanki with the half-dragon (red) template applied. Once a duthka'gith has matured, the Ch'r'ai remove it from the hatchery and take it to another stronghold on the Material Plane, where it is trained to fight.

VLAAKITH THE LICH-QUEEN

Commanding vast armies in citadels across the Astral Plane is Vlaakith, the thousand-year-old lich-queen to whom all githyanki owe fealty (or at least pretend to). She rarely ventures beyond her obsidian Palace of Whispers, but her eyes, ears, and mind-probing instruments are everywhere.

Vlaakith is also the reason why there are no githyanki clerics. A would-be goddess herself, Vlaakith cannot abide the notion of a githyanki worshiping anyone else. In githyanki society, offering a prayer to anyone other than Vlaakith is a capital crime.

Vlaakith is described below with the items she's never without, including the *crown of corruption* and the *scepter of Ephelomon*.

Vlaakith the Lich-Queen, Female Githyanki Lich Wiz25: CR 28; Medium Undead; HD 25d12; hp 180; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 33, touch 20, flat-footed 27; BAB +13; Grap +16; Atk +21 melee (2d6+9/19–20, *+5 dancing vorpal silver sword*) or +16 melee touch (1d8+5 plus paralysis, negative energy touch); Full Atk +21/+16/+11 melee (2d6+9/19–20, *+5 dancing vorpal silver sword*) or +16 melee touch (1d8+5 plus paralysis, negative energy touch); SA damaging touch, fear aura, paralyzing touch, psionics, spells; SQ damage reduction 15/magic bludgeoning, immunities (cold, electricity, polymorph, mind-affecting attacks), +4 turn resistance; SR 30; AL CE; Fort +8, Ref +14, Will +17; Str 16, Dex 22, Con —, Int 32, Wis 16, Cha 25.

Skills: Concentration +28, Craft (alchemy) +37, Diplomacy +9, Hide +14, Intimidate +21, Knowledge (arcana) +39, Knowledge (history) +23, Knowledge (the planes) +39, Listen +11, Move Silently +14, Search +34, Sense Motive +29, Spellcraft +41, Spot +26. *Feats:* Craft Epic Wondrous Item, Craft Wondrous Item, Empower Spell, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*silver sword*), Extend Spell, Forge Ring, Greater Spell Focus (Necromancy), Greater Spell Focus (Transmutation), Greater Spell Penetration, Improved Spell Capacity (10th), Improved Spell Capacity (11th), Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Necromancy), Spell Focus (Transmutation), Spell Penetration.

Damaging Touch (Ex): Vlaakith's black, desiccated body courses with negative energy, such that her touch deals 1d8+5 points of damage. A successful Will save (DC 29) halves the damage.

Fear Aura (Su): Vlaakith's form is so horrid that creatures with fewer than 5 Hit Dice within 60 feet must succeed at a Will save (DC 29) or be affected as the *fear* spell cast by a 25th-level caster.

Immunities: Liches are immune to cold, electricity, polymorph, and mind-influencing spells and effects. As long as she is holding the *scepter of Ephelomon*, Vlaakith is also immune to fire.

Paralyzing Touch (Su): Any living creature touched by Vlaakith must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 29) or be permanently paralyzed. *Remove paralysis* and any curse-removing spell can free the victim, but the paralyzing touch cannot be dispelled. The victim appears dead; only a successful Spot check (DC 20) or Heal check (DC 15) reveals that the victim is still alive.

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 17), *dimension door, mage hand, telekinesis* (DC 22); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 24). Caster level 25th; save DC 17 + spell level.

Wizard Spells Prepared (4/7/7/7/10/6/6/6/5/5/2/2; base save DC = 22 + spell level): 0—*detect magic* ×2, *mage hand, open/close*; 1st—*change self, magic missile* ×2, *obscuring mist, shield* ×2, *unseen servant*; 2nd—*bull's strength, detect thoughts* ×2, *mirror image, touch of idiocy* ×2, *web*; 3rd—*dispel magic, displacement, lightning bolt, magic circle against good*, empowered *ray of enfeeblement, slow**, extended *spectral hand*; 4th—*animate dead, contagion**, *dimensional anchor* ×2, *enervation*, extended *haste* ×2, extended *heroism, scrying, stoneskin*; 5th—*dismissal* (DC special), *hold monster*, empowered *vampiric touch, magic jar**, *wall of force, waves of fatigue*; 6th—*disintegrate** ×2, empowered enervation, greater dispel magic ×2, true seeing; 7th—extended *eyebite** ×2, *finger of death**, *greater teleport* ×2, *waves of exhaustion*; 8th—empowered *circle of death**, *horrid wilting**, *protection from spells, screen* ×2; 9th—*foresight, gate*, empowered *spell turning, wail of the banshee**, *wish*; 10th—extended *dominate monster*, empowered *horrid wilting**; 11th—empowered *time stop* ×2.

*Necromancy or Transmutation spells. The base save DC for these spells is 24 + spell level.

Possessions: +5 dancing vorpal silver sword (treat as greatsword), *crown of corruption, scepter of Ephelomon, headband of intellect +6, bracers of armor +8, gloves of Dexterity +6, cloak of Charisma +6, ring of wizardry IV, ring of protection +4, robe of eyes,* scrolls (*prismatic sphere, time stop, protection from spells, shapechange, stone shape*), ring of 12 iron keys (keys unlock chests in area **36**).

VLAAKITH'S TACTICS

Vlaakith begins the adventure in her throneroom (area **7**) and senses whenever living creatures enter her palace. At that point, she begins using the *clairaudience/clairvoyance* ability granted by the magic of her palace to spy on the interlopers. If she detects the arrival of githyanki, she sends Xam'kras and his Ch'r'ai lieutenants (see area **10**) to confront them and determine their intentions. If she detects the arrival of non-githyanki intruders or discovers that the newly arrived githyanki seek to destroy her, she sends any nearby tl'a'ikiths to annihilate them. If the tl'a'ikiths are destroyed, she sends Xam'kras, his subordinates, and any nearby duthka'giths to finish the job.

DEFENSIVE TACTICS

While her minions keep the PCs busy, Vlaakith prepares for battle. She casts empowered *time stop* so that she may cast the following array of spells on herself before leading six tl'a'ikiths and six kr'y'izoths into battle against the interlopers:

Round 1: *Foresight* (lasts 250 minutes; can't be surprised or flat-footed; +2 insight bonus to AC and Reflex saves) and quickened *displacement* (lasts 25 rounds; attacks suffer a 50% miss chance).

Round 2: *Stoneskin* (lasts 250 minutes or until discharged; gains damage reduction 10/adamantine; spell can absorb up to 150 points of damage) and quickened *protection from spells* (lasts 250 minutes; gains +8 resistance bonus on saves against spells and spell-like abilities).

Round 3: Empowered *spell turning* (lasts 250 minutes or until expended; 1d4+6 levels of targeted spells are turned back at the caster, +50% because the spell is empowered).

Round 4: Extended *haste* (lasts 50 rounds; gains extra attack during a full attack action; +1 bonus on attack rolls; +1 dodge bonus to AC; +1 dodge bonus on Reflex saves; speed increases by 30 feet).

Round 5: *True seeing* (lasts 25 minutes; sees through darkness and illusions, and recognizes true forms) and quickened *magic circle against good* (250 minutes; gains +2 resistance bonus on all saving throws; prevents bodily contact by summoned or conjured creatures except evil elementals and evil outsiders).

If half of her undead bodyguards are turned or destroyed, or if she is reduced to 90 or fewer hit points, Vlaakith casts *greater teleport* to reach her reliquary (area **38**). There, the lich-queen instructs her kr'y'izoth minions to use their spell conversion ability to heal her, which they do at once. She then casts empowered *time stop* so that she may cast the following defensive spells on herself:

Round 1: Extended *heroism* (lasts 500 minutes; gains +2 morale bonus on attack rolls, saves, and skill checks).

Round 2: Extended *haste* (lasts 50 rounds; gains extra attack during a full attack action; +1 bonus on attack rolls; +1 dodge bonus to AC; +1 dodge bonus on Reflex saves; speed increases by 30 feet).

Round 3: *Dimensional anchor* (lasts 25 minutes; protects against *maze* spells) and quickened *blur* (25 minutes; attacks suffer a 20% miss chance).

Round 4: *Bull's strength* (lasts 25 minutes; +4 Strength) and quickened *mirror image* (lasts 25 minutes; creates 8 images).

Round 5: *Stoneskin* (lasts 250 minutes or until discharged; gains damage reduction 10/adamantine; spell can absorb up to 150 points of damage) from the scroll she carries.

If Vlaakith is destroyed, her life essence returns to her phylactery, which is hidden in area **49**.

OFFENSIVE TACTICS

Vlaakith's offensive tactics vary, depending on whom she's fighting. When faced with multiple opponents, she prefers to send her *dancing vorpal sword* after the most threatening foe while casting the following spells:

Wail of the banshee: Affects up to 25 creatures within a 40-ft.-radius spread, starting with creatures closest to the spell's point of origin; undead are immune.

Horrid wilting: Deals 20d6 points of damage (20d8 against water elementals and plant creatures) to living creatures, no two of which can be more than 60 feet apart.

Slow: Up to 25 creatures, no two of which can be more than 30 feet apart, can take only a single move action or standard action each turn, but not both; creatures also move at half speed and take a –1 penalty on attack rolls, AC, and Reflex saves.

When targeting spellcasters or characters with poor Fortitude saves, Vlaakith prefers the following spells:

Greater dispel magic: Targets enemy spellcaster (roll 1d20+20 per ongoing spell in effect)

Extended *spectral hand* (lasts 50 minutes): Used to deliver touch range spells such as *contagion, touch of idiocy,* and empowered *vampiric touch*; +2 bonus on melee touch attack rolls; Vlaakith loses 1d4 hit points that return when the spell ends, but not if the hand is destroyed.

Finger of death: Creature dies or takes 3d6+25 points of damage on a successful save.

Disintegrate: Creature takes 40d6 points of damage, or 5d6 if the save succeeds.

When targeting armored characters or characters with poor Will saves, Vlaakith prefers the following spells:

Enervation: Target gains 1d4 negative levels; each negative level gives a –1 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, ability checks, and effective level.

Empowered *enervation:* Target gains 1d4 negative levels, +50% because the spell is empowered; each negative level gives a –1 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, ability checks, and effective level.

Dismissal: Forces extraplanar creature back to its own plane (80% chance) or another plane (20% chance).

Extended *dominate monster*: Target follows orders for 50 days.

Empowered *ray of enfeeblement*: Target takes 1d6+5 points of Strength damage, +50% because the spell is empowered.

CALLING FOR AID

Vlaakith's palace contains plenty of guardians. If these prove insufficient, the lich-queen uses the *gate* ability of the *scepter of Ephelomon* to bring forth a very old red dragon (see *Monster Manual*, page 75). She can also use her *gate* spell to call forth a paeliryon devil (see *Fiend Folio*, page 58) named Urrfestro that owes her a favor.

NEW ARTIFACTS

Vlaakith has two artifacts in her possession at all times: the *crown of corruption* and the *scepter of Ephelomon*. These unique items are described below.

CROWN OF CORRUPTION

This slender, black-and-silver diadem has rested atop Vlaakith's head for more than 900 years, serving as her badge of office and the means of testing any githyanki who would threaten her. Those who have beheld the crown say it twitches of its own volition, and that the 5,000-gp rubies that adorn the crown's spires look something like flickering eyes.

The crown has the following command-word activated powers:

Energy drain (Fortitude save, DC 23, negates).

Mass suggestion (Will save, DC 19, negates).

Control undead (Will save, DC 20, negates)

In addition, if the wearer of the *crown of corruption* touches the corpse of a creature killed by its *energy drain* attack, the corpse transforms in one of three ways. Each transformation takes 10 minutes.

Ritual of the Tl'a'ikith: The corpse rises as a tl'a'ikith under the control of the wearer of the crown.

Ritual of the Kr'y'izoth: The corpse rises as a kr'y'izoth under the control of the wearer of the crown.

Ritual of Death's Ichor: The corpse liquifies, then congeals into an ectoplasmic substance useful for magic item creation or spellcasting. Each corpse provides enough ectoplasm to count for (100×HD) experience points when making an item or paying the experience point cost of a spell.

The *crown of corruption* has 30 hit points. However, only a magic weapon with the holy and disrupting special qualities can damage it. If the *crown of corruption* is destroyed, all tl'a'ikiths and kr'y'izoths created by the crown are destroyed as well.

Caster Level: 25th; *Weight:* 3 lb.

SCEPTER OF EPHELOMON

This ruby-encrusted, dragon-shaped scepter was Ephelomon's gift to the githyanki centuries ago when the pact with red dragons was forged. Ephelomon gave the scepter to the first Vlaakith (the current Vlaakith's ancestor), saying "go forth and conquer all."

The scepter has the following powers:

The bearer has total control over red dragons. Any red dragon who approaches within a half-mile of the scepter must succeed at a Will save (DC 35) or be affected as a *dominate monster* spell cast by a 30th-level caster.

The bearer is immune to fire and fear effects.

Once per week, the bearer can create a *gate* through which a very old red dragon flies (see the *Monster Manual* for the very old red dragon's statistics). The dragon must immediately make a Will save (DC 35) or serve the scepter-bearer without reward. Even if the dragon makes its save, it is considered controlled as described in the *gate* spell and may be ordered to fight the scepter-bearer's foes, or the dragon can bargain with the bearer of the scepter.

The *scepter of Ephelomon* has 60 hit points and can only be damaged by the claws of Bahamut or one of his chosen vassals, a magic weapon with the bane (evil dragons) special ability, or by the cold breath weapon of a good-aligned silver dragon. If the scepter is destroyed, the pact between the githyanki and the red dragons dissolves. The red dragons do not immediately turn against the githyanki, but only the most subservient ones continue to serve or assist the githyanki in any way. Red dragons in Vlaakith's service continue to serve the lich-queen out of fear, but not loyalty.

Caster Level: 30th; *Weight:* 5 lb.

DEATH TO VLAAKITH!

Assuming the PCs don't abandon their quest to destroy the lich-queen, the adventure can end in one of two ways: Either they succeed in destroying Vlaakith forever, or they perish heroically in the attempt. If the PCs destroy Vlaakith and her phylactery, the lich-queen is destroyed forever. Her demise triggers several events:

The earthquakes rocking Tu'narath cease as the One in the Void returns to a state of rest.

The Palace of Whispers releases all of its trapped souls. These souls burst from the walls of Susurrus and depart for various outer planes. The obsidian turns brittle and, ten rounds later, the palace collapses in on itself, dealing 40d6 points of damage to any creature trapped within (Reflex save DC 30 for half damage). Only the great statue of Gith (see area 1) remains standing.

Githyanki everywhere lose their spell-like ability to *plane shift*. With the exception of warlocks and gish with access to the *plane shift* spell, githyanki on the Astral Plane are stranded and separated from their invasion forces and egg hatcheries on the Material Plane. Various githyanki warlords in Tu'narath and elsewhere are left to contemplate the future of a githyanki race, whose ability to travel the planes has been greatly diminished. They and the citizens of Tu'narath must also grieve for their fallen queen.

Ancient prophecies foretell that when things look bleakest for the githyanki people, Gith will return to save her people from despair. The reappearance of this legendary champion-turned-demigod might serve as grist for an epic-level campaign, possibly centered on the reunification of the githyanki and githzerai people, the appearance of the first githyanki clerics, and a gith holy war against the ancient empires of the illithids.

Until Gith returns, the githyanki must find a new leader to replace Vlaakith. Although Zetch'r'r has the charisma to gain a political foothold, some of his beliefs are radical and unpopular, and he has many competent rivals. Conflicts between power-hungry warlords leave the githyanki people in turmoil for years to come. The githyanki invasion of the Material Plane comes to a gradual end as githyanki forces retreat, regroup, and fortify their faction strongholds.

Zetch'r'r honors any deal he made with the PCs, if only to avoid the fate that befell Vlaakith. He vows to use his influence to stop any further githyanki incursions on the heroes' world, and he takes great pains not to cross paths with the PCs in the future.

VLAAKITH LIVES!

If the PCs fail to destroy the lich-queen and her phylactery, she will eventually achieve godhood by capturing the divine spark of the One in the Void. From that point forward, githyanki may become clerics of Vlaakith. The lich-queen bequeaths spells to her loyal worshipers from the domains of Chaos, Destruction, and Evil.

Vlaakith's rise to godhood does not come without cost. Quakes shatter the dead god into several pieces, and more than half of Tu'narath's population perishes in the devastation. However, word of Vlaakith's ascendance begins spreading to every corner of every plane, and the githyanki people enjoy a period of exultation matched by the nearly overwhelming desire to crush their pitiful enemies in their goddess's unhallowed name.

KR'Y'IZOTH

Kr'y'izoths are created when a Vlaakith energy-drains a high-level githyanki spellcaster. Because kr'y'izoths are far more social and versatile than the tl'a'ikiths, the lich-queen uses them as high-level troubleshooters. Because they can magically heal others, they're often attached to elite githyanki units (natural healing is impossible on the Astral Plane, and loyal githyanki are never clerics).

Kr'y'izoths appear as emaciated, charred githyanki shrouded in flickering, shadowy black flames. The black flames obscure their features to such a great degree that even those who knew them in life are hard-pressed to recognize them as undead. When they deign to speak, it is in hollow, clipped tones.

SAMPLE KR'Y'IZOTH

Kr'y'izoth (Githyanki Wiz16)
Medium Undead
Hit Dice: 16d12 (104 hp)
Initiative: +3
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares); fly 220 ft. (perfect) (44 squares) on Astral Plane
Armor Class: 24 (+3 Dex, +3 natural, +6 bracers of armor, +2 deflection), touch 13, flat-footed 21
Base Attack/Grapple: +8/+7
Attack: Blackflame touch +8 melee touch (1d4 negative levels plus 1d6+16 fire)
Full Attack: Blackflame touch +8/+3 melee touch (1d4 negative levels plus 1d6+16 fire)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Blackflame touch
Special Qualities: Blackflame shield, heat mirage, psionics, spell conversion, spell resistance 21, turn resistance +4, undead traits
Saves: Fort +12, Ref +14, Will +15
Abilities: Str 10, Dex 16, Con —, Int 22, Wis 10, Cha 10.
Skills: Concentration +19, Craft (alchemy) +13, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (the planes) +14, Listen +4, Ride +6, Spellcraft +18, Spot +4
Feats: Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Staff, Craft Wondrous Item, Forge Ring, Maximize Spell, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Spell Penetration
Environment: Astral Plane
Organization: Solitary or gang (2–4)
Challenge Rating: 20
Treasure: No coins; no goods; standard items
Alignment: Always neutral evil
Advancement: By character class

All kr'y'izoths encountered in the lich-queen's palace are the undead remnants of 16th-level githyanki wizards.

COMBAT

A kr'y'izoth retains the psionic spell-like abilities and wizard spells it knew in life. It also retains full use of its equipment. Before entering battle, a kr'y'izoth usually casts the following spells on itself: *bull's strength, blur, dimensional anchor, eagle's splendor, fire shield* (chill shield version), *resist energy* (sonic), *shield, spell turning,* and *stoneskin.* During a battle, a kr'y'izoth alternates between casting offensive spells and using its *staff of necromancy*, although spells casts from the staff are not quickened on the Astral Plane.

A kr'y'izoth encountered in Susurrus carries the following magic items: *bracers of armor +6, ring of protection +2, gloves of Dexterity +4, cloak of resistance +5, headband of intellect +4, staff of necromancy* (50 charges), scroll of *greater dispel magic* (caster level 15th), scroll of *Bigby's clenched fist* (caster level 15th).

Blackflame Touch (Su): The mere touch of a kr'y'izoth bestows 1d4 negative levels on the target and deals 1d6 points of fire damage, plus an additional point of fire damage for each of the kr'y'izoth's character levels or Hit Dice. If a kr'y'izoth uses blackflame touch, it can't use spell conversion for 1d4 rounds.

Blackflame Shield (Su): Any creature striking a kr'y'izoth with its body or handheld weapons deals normal damage, but at the same time the attacker takes 1d6 points of fire damage, plus an additional point of fire damage for each of the kr'y'izoth's character levels or Hit Dice. Weapons with exceptional reach, such as longspears, do not endanger their users in this way.

Heat Mirage (Ex): The heat from a kr'y'izoth's flames creates mirages and haze in the air around it, giving the kr'y'izoth concealment (20% miss chance). Opponents who have *true seeing* or use nonvisual means to discern their targets are unaffected.

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 10), *dimension door, mage hand, telekinesis* (DC 15); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 17). Caster level 16th; save DC 10 + spell level.

Spell Conversion (Ex): By tapping a conduit to the Negative Energy Plane, a kr'y'izoth can convert any unused spell slot into an *inflict* spell of the appropriate level. This functions just as spontaneous *inflict* casting by clerics, except that the spells are probably arcane. If a kr'y'izoth uses spell conversion, it can't use its blackflame touch for 1d4 rounds.

Wizard Spells Prepared (4/6/6/5/5/5/4/3/2; base save DC = 16 + spell level): 0—*daze, detect magic, read magic, resistance;* 1st—*chill touch, expeditious retreat, magic missile* ×2, *ray of enfeeblement, shield;* 2nd—*detect thoughts, bull's strength, cat's grace, eagle's splendor, resist energy, scorching ray;* 3rd—*arcane sight, fireball, greater magic weapon, hold person, lightning bolt;* 4th—*dimensional anchor, fire shield, maximized magic missile* ×2, *stoneskin;* 5th—*cone of cold, dominate person, feeblemind, mind fog, waves of fatigue;* 6th—*disintegrate, flesh to stone, greater dispel magic* ×2; 7th—*greater scrying, power word stun, spell turning;* 8th—*horrid wilting, polar ray.*

CREATING A KR'Y'IZOTH

"Kr'y'izoth" is an acquired template that can be added to any dead humanoid or outsider, although Vlaakith only creates them from fallen githyanki. The dead creature, referred to hereafter as the "base creature," must be able to cast at least 5th-level spells. The creature's type changes to undead. It otherwise uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Hit Dice: Increase to d12.

Speed: Kr'y'izoths have a speed of 30 feet on the rare occasions they leave the Astral Plane. On the Astral Plane, they move as others do, traveling by thought alone at a speed of 10 feet per point of Intelligence.

AC: Kr'y'izoths gain a +3 natural armor bonus, unless the base creature's natural armor bonus was higher.

Attacks: The kr'y'izoth retains all the attacks of the base creature.

Special Attacks: The kr'y'izoth retains all special attacks, including any psionics.

Blackflame Touch (*Su*)*:* The mere touch of a kr'y'izoth bestows 1d4 negative levels on the target and deals 1d6 points of fire damage, plus an additional point of fire damage for each of the kr'y'izoth's character levels or Hit Dice. If a kr'y'izoth uses blackflame touch, it can't use spell conversion for 1d4 rounds.

Spells: The kr'y'izoth can cast any spells it could cast while alive.

Special Qualities: A kr'y'izoth has all the special qualities of the base creature and those listed below. Furthermore it gains the undead type.

Blackflame Shield (*Su*)*:* Any creature striking a kr'y'izoth with its body or handheld weapons deals normal damage, but at the same time the attacker takes 1d6 points of fire damage, plus an additional point of fire damage for each of the kr'y'izoth's character levels or Hit Dice. Weapons with exceptional reach, such as longspears, do not endanger their users in this way.

Heat Mirage (*Ex*)*:* The heat from a kr'y'izoth's flames creates mirages and haze in the air around it, giving the kr'y'izoth concealment (20% miss chance). Opponents who have *true seeing* or use nonvisual means to discern their targets are unaffected.

Spell Conversion (*Ex*)*:* By tapping a conduit to the Positive Energy Plane, a kr'y'izoth can convert any unused spell slot into a *cure* spell of the appropriate level. This functions just as spontaneous *cure* casting by clerics, except that the spells are probably arcane. If a kr'y'izoth uses spell conversion, it can't use its blackflame touch for 1d4 rounds.

Turn Resistance (*Ex*)*:* A kr'y'izoth has +4 turn resistance.

Saves: Same as the base creature.

Abilities: Same as the base creature, except that the kr'y'izoth has no Constitution score.

Skills: Same as the base creature.

Feats: Same as the base creature.

Environment: Astral Plane

Organization: Solitary or gang (2–4)

Challenge Rating: Same as base creature +2

Treasure: No coins; no goods; standard items

Alignment: Always neutral evil

Advancement: Same as the base creature

TL'A'IKITH

Tl'a'ikiths are the spectral remnants of loyal githyanki fighters and rangers who have been reduced to an undead state by Vlaakith. They never speak, drifting through the lich-queen's palace of Susurrus on patrol or guarding an important githyanki armory. Tl'a'ikiths appear much as they did in life, many still clutching their *silver swords*, although all appear pale and obviously incorporeal.

SAMPLE TL'A'IKITH

Tl'a'ikith (Githyanki Ftr16)
Medium Undead (Incorporeal)
Hit Dice: 16d12 (104 hp)
Initiative: +1
Speed: Fly 30 ft. (perfect) (6 squares); fly 110 ft. (perfect) (22 squares) on Astral Plane
Armor Class: 22 (+1 Dex, +3 deflection, +8 +3 *breastplate*), touch 14, flat-footed 21
Base Attack/Grapple: +16/—
Attack: +3 *silver sword* +24 melee (2d6+9/17–20) or +2 *composite longbow* (+4 Strength) with +1 *arrow* +20 ranged (1d8+5/×3)
Full Attack: +3 *silver sword* +24/+19/+14/+9 melee (2d6+9/17–20) or +2 *composite longbow* [+4 Str] +19/+14/+9/+4 ranged (1d8+6/×3)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Ghost touch, *silver sword*, spell-like abilities
Special Qualities: Incorporeal subtype, psionics, turn resistance +4, spell resistance 21, undead traits
Saves: Fort +14, Ref +9, Will +7
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 12, Con —, Int 11, Wis 8, Cha 16.
Skills: Craft (armorsmithing) +8, Craft (weaponsmithing) +9, Listen +3, Ride +8, Search +3, Spot +3
Feats: Alertness, Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*silver sword*), Great Cleave, Improved Critical (greatsword), Improved Sunder, Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Ride-By Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword)
Environment: Astral Plane
Organization: Solitary or gang (2–4)
Challenge Rating: 20
Treasure: No coins; no goods; standard items
Alignment: Always neutral evil
Advancement: By character class

All tl'a'ikiths encountered in the lich-queen's palace are the undead remnants of 16th-level githyanki fighters.

COMBAT

Tl'a'ikiths prefer straightforward tactics, slicing opponents to pieces with their *silver swords* or attacking foes at range with their ghostly composite longbows.

A tl'a'ikith encountered in Susurrus carries the following magic items: +3 *breastplate*, +3 *silver sword* (treat as greatsword), +2 *mighty composite longbow* [+4 Str] with 50 arrows, *gauntlets of ogre power* +2, *cloak of resistance* +3.

***Ghost Touch* (Sp):** Any weapon, shield, or suit of armor touched by the base creature when the tl'a'ikith rises is thereafter considered a ghost touch weapon as long as it is wielded in the hand of the tl'a'ikith. The tl'a'ikith gives this ability to the object; the object doesn't possess it on its own. If the tl'a'ikith is slain or drops the weapon, it instantly loses the ghost touch property.

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur*, *daze* (DC 13), *dimension door*, *mage hand*, *telekinesis* (DC 18); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 20). Caster level 16th; save DC 13 + spell level.

Silver Sword: When drawn, the *silver sword* transforms into a column of silvery liquid, altering the weapon's balance round by round as the blade's shape flows and shimmers. A *silver sword*

has the additional quality of reaching into the minds of the foes it strikes, disrupting their psionic powers. A target hit by the weapon must make a DC 17 Fortitude save or lose any psionic spell-like abilities for 1d4 rounds.

A tl'a'ikith may use its *silver sword* (see below) to attack astral travelers' silver cords. The normally insubstantial cord is treated as a tangible object with the owner's AC, hardness 10, and 20 hit points.

Spell-like Abilities: At will—*darkness, detect thoughts, dimensional anchor, true seeing, weird*. Caster level equal to base creature's level or HD; save DC 10 + spell level + Charisma bonus.

CREATING A TL'A'IKITH

"Tl'a'ikith" is an acquired template that can be added to any dead humanoid or outsider, although Vlaakith only creates them from fallen high-level githyanki soldiers. The dead creature, referred to hereafter as the "base creature," must have a Charisma score of at least 8. The creature's type changes to undead. It otherwise uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Hit Dice: Increase to d12.

Speed: Tl'a'ikiths have a fly speed of 40 feet on the rare occasions they leave the Astral Plane. On the Astral Plane, they move as others do, traveling by thought alone at a speed of 10 feet per point of Intelligence.

AC: Natural armor, if any, is converted to a deflection bonus of the same amount. Additionally, tl'a'ikiths gain a deflection bonus to AC equal to their (new) Charisma bonus.

Attacks: The tl'a'ikith retains all the attacks of the base creature.

Special Attacks: The tl'a'ikith retains all special attacks, including any psionics. Psionic powers now function as the spells cast by 20th-level casters.

Ghost Touch (*Sp*): Any weapon touched by the base creature when the tl'a'ikith rises is thereafter considered a ghost touch weapon as long as it's in the hand of the tl'a'ikith. The tl'a'ikith gives this ability to the weapon; the weapon doesn't have it on its own. If the tl'a'ikith is slain or drops the weapon, it instantly loses the ghost touch property.

Spell-like Abilities: At will—*darkness, detect thoughts, dimensional anchor, true seeing, weird*. Caster level equal to base creature's level or HD; save DC 10 + spell level + Charisma bonus.

Special Qualities: A tl'a'ikith has all the special qualities of the base creature and those listed below. Furthermore, it gains the undead type and the incorporeal subtype.

Turn Resistance (*Ex*): A tl'a'ikith has +4 turn resistance.

Saves: Same as the base creature.

Abilities: Same as the base creature, except that the tl'a'ikith has no Constitution score, and its Charisma score increases by +6.

Skills: Tl'a'ikiths receive a +8 racial bonus on Listen, Search, and Spot checks. Because they are incorporeal, they always move silently and cannot be heard with Listen checks. Otherwise same as the base creature.

Feats: Same as the base creature.

Environment: Astral Plane

Organization: Solitary or gang (2–4)

Challenge Rating: Same as base creature +2

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral evil

Advancement: Same as the base creature

NEW MAGIC ITEMS

The following new magic items appear in this adventure:

Coldfire Candle: This heavy black candle burns with a cold blue flame that cannot be snuffed or doused without destroying the item. Once the candle is lit, any living creature that touches the candle or its flame takes 1d6 points of negative energy damage plus 1 point of temporary Strength damage. A successful Fortitude save (DC 12) negates the Strength damage. An undead creature that touches a lit *coldfire candle* takes no damage but must succeed at a Will save (DC 12) or flee as if panicked for 1d4+1 rounds. A *coldfire candle* burns for 24 hours, or twenty times as long on the Astral Plane.

Faint necromancy; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item, *chill touch*; Price 150 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Eye Tyrant Armor: This hulking suit of spherical *+4 full plate* is designed specifically for beholders. It covers a beholder's entire body and has articulated steel flanges and protrusions to protect its eyestalks. It provides a +4 enhancement bonus to the beholder's Strength. Furthermore, attached to the armor are four mechanical arms ending in small pincers. The beholder can wield a different melee weapon in each pincer and attack with all four weapons in the same round. It can also use the pincers as weapons, dealing 1d4 points of damage per pincer.

Strong abjuration; CL 12th; Craft Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, *animate objects, bull's strength*; Price 119,500 gp (does not include weapons); Weight 250 lb.

Slaad Cloak: A *slaad cloak* is fashioned from the hide of a dead slaad. The color of the slaad determines the cloak's coloration, but one trait they all share is their supple yet warty texture. This adventure includes two types of cloaks, although other colors are possible.

A *red slaad cloak* provides a +3 natural armor bonus, sonic resistance 10, and resistance 5 against acid, cold, electricity, and fire.

Strong abjuration; CL 15th; Craft Wondrous Item, red slaad skin, *resist energy*; Price 36,750 gp; Weight 10 lb.

A *green slaad cloak* provides a +5 natural armor bonus, sonic resistance 10, and resistance 5 against acid, cold, electricity, and fire. It also allows the wearer to use the following spell-like abilities: At will—*see invisibility*; 1/day—*fear* (DC 18). Caster level 15th; save DC 14 + spell level.

Strong abjuration, divination, and necromancy; CL 15th; Craft Wondrous Item, green slaad skin, *fear, resist energy, see invisibility*; Price 124,500 gp; Weight 10 lb. Ω

PUNY HUMANS: The Invasion Starts Now!

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Knights of the Lich-Queen

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Rise of the Githyanki

Derek Thompson

Chapter 1: A Brief History of the Githyanki

The earliest origins of the githyanki (and their close cousins, the githzerai) lie on the ruins of some unknown Material-Plane world, where the ancestors of githkind were a proud and mighty human civilization. In long-distant ages, a vast empire of mind flayers conquered this world, adding it to their planet-spanning empire and utterly subjugating all its races. They enslaved the ancestors of the gith, breeding them to be effective warriors for the mind flayer cause—much like grimlocks now serve the mind flayers as warriors and bodyguards. Through their long years of slavery, the ancestors of the gith races slowly changed in ways both subtle and obvious until they were no longer recognizable as the humans they once were. In particular, they developed their inherent psionic abilities, which led eventually to their liberation.

A psionic foe, no matter how submissive, is a more serious threat to a mind flayer than a nonpsionic one, and the giths were bred as warriors, not meek mind-slaves. With the development of their psionic powers, the giths became more difficult to control, and their mind flayer masters grew increasingly brutal in their attempts to keep them subservient and obedient. A number of small-scale revolts arose among the giths as among other populations of slaves, but all were quickly and brutally suppressed.

Then came Gith. Little is known for sure about this heroic woman, despite the wealth of legends told about her among the githyanki to this day. Some tales say that she was a powerful slave to a powerful illithid master, serving as the creature's personal bodyguard and a champion of the illithid empire; others claim that she was nothing more than a lowly footsoldier and barely more than a child. Whatever the truth, she grew to hate the mind flayers and successfully organized the revolt that liberated her people and sent the illithid empire on its first step toward utter ruin.

Something about Gith—her great charisma, an ability to form alliances among different groups of rebellious slaves, or perhaps just the consuming fire of her hatred and rage—made her successful where so many others had failed miserably. Under her leadership, slaves rose up like a mighty wave to sweep away the foundations of the illithid empire. At her command, the followers of Gith launched a crusade to topple every mind flayer stronghold and annihilate the illithids. This crusade, however, was sabotaged by a splinter group led by one Zerthimon, who claimed Gith was leading her people into a new form of slavery, the illithid empire replaced by Gith's tyrannical new realm. Civil war replaced unholy crusade, and the gith peoples—githzerai, the followers of Zerthimon, and githyanki, the "true children of Gith"—were forever sundered.

Too weakened by years of civil war to pursue their crusade against the illithids, the githyanki retreated to fortresses on the Astral Plane, where they have lived ever since. Soon after their establishment on the Astral Plane, a wizard named Vlaakith began advising Gith on matters of state. In search of allies, Vlaakith first appealed to the slaadi, natives of Limbo, seeking to enlist them to help destroy the githzerai. The chaotic slaadi were not interested in any kind of agreement, so Vlaakith turned next to a deity of conquest: the dragon goddess Tiamat. Gith herself ventured into the Nine Hells to meet with Tiamat.

Only speculative legend tells what happened in this meeting, but the results are well-documented. Although Gith herself has not been seen since, Ephelomon—a fiendish red dragon who serves as one of Tiamat's consorts—traveled to the Astral Plane to give Vlaakith word of the agreement that had been reached. To aid the githyanki in their unending mission of conquest, red dragons would forever be the allies of the githyanki race. In addition, Ephelomon proclaimed that Gith had named Vlaakith as her successor, to lead the githyanki and carry on Gith's legacy of conquest. He would not say what happened to Gith.

Vlaakith is now as much a title as a name, borne for the past thousand years by a Lich-Queen who is perhaps the greatest of her line. With the power only undeath can grant, the current Vlaakith has finally called for a new crusade, and all the power of the githyanki musters at her command. Bringing the ancient dragon pact to new levels, Vlaakith has bred a race of half-dragon commanders, superwarriors called duthka'gith. She has raised the standards of war and named a target: a world on the Material Plane called Pharagos. Now the armies of the githyanki march for conquest once more, on a scale not seen since the nearly forgotten time when githyanki and githzerai were one.

A History of Hate: Illithids and Githzerai

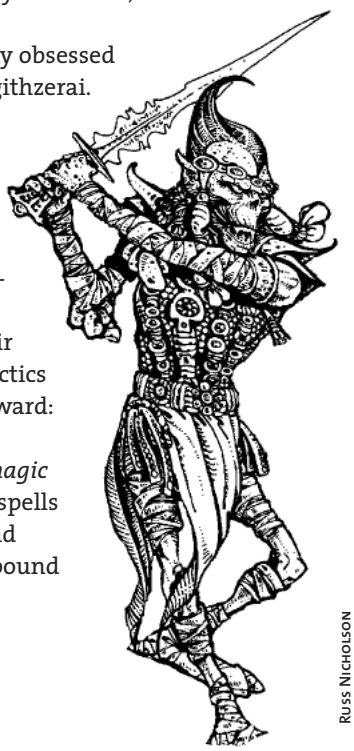
Although their history stretches back to a time before many Material Plane worlds were born, it is the beginning of that long story that shapes the minds and hearts of living githyanki more than any other event over the intervening millennia. Their origins in slavery and the revolt of Zerthimon are the two defining events in githyanki history, the events by which they still define who they are—by whom they hate.

Githyanki loathing of the mind flayers runs so deep as to be unfathomable. Every githwarrior, warlock, and multiclass gish must, as part of her early training, participate in an illithid hunting party as a ritual of initiation. These githyanki units travel to the Material Plane to find illithids and slay as many as possible before returning home. This racial ritual cements each githyanki's place in the history of her people as she participates in a small-scale reenactment of Gith's war of liberation. A hunting party of this sort is usually led by a knight of 7th to 9th level and made up of a warlock or gish of 5th to 7th level and three to nine githwarriors and warlocks of 1st to 3rd level. When the githyanki become aware of multiple mind flayers lairing together, they often send larger groups to hunt them. These missions generally include githwarriors and warlocks of 4th to 6th level, since they are too dangerous for unproven striplings.

There are some githyanki, of course, who make this deep hatred of mind flayers into a lifelong obsession, specializing in hunting mind flayers and exterminating them. The gish mindslayer prestige class detailed in the next chapter provides one example of the skills and techniques such hunters use. The best offense against a mind flayer, as the githyanki know well, is a good defense—specifically, protection against its *mind blast* and other psionic abilities. Many would-be illithid hunters take the Iron Will and Improved Spell Resistance feats early in their careers, then seek out magical protection against mind-affecting spells. Once they are high enough level, their innate *dimension door* ability allows them to circumvent legions of enthralled minions to reach an illithid master.

This hatred of illithids is the only passion that surpasses the githyanki hatred of the githzerai, whom they refuse to honor with Gith's name, calling them simply zerths, Zerth-lovers, or betrayers of Gith. Warfare against the githzerai is not such an integral part of every githyanki's life as the illithid-hunting ritual, perhaps because Zerthimon's revolt is much more of an embarrassment to the githyanki than their glorious rebellion against the mind flayers. All the same, each githyanki city launches an assault into the depths of Limbo to strike at the githzerai at least once a year. The fortresses of the githzerai on Limbo are virtually unassailable, so the githyanki generally strike at caravans or smaller compounds, seeking to cause as much damage and fear as possible before withdrawing. For their part, the githzerai frequently launch full-scale assaults on githyanki fortress-cities on the Astral Plane, resulting in huge battles with many casualties, but no real victory for either side.

Few githyanki are truly obsessed with their hatred of the githzerai. A great many githyanki rangers have githzerai as a favored enemy, but they choose higher bonuses against mind flayers. All githwarriors and warlocks study tactics to use against their ancient foes, but these tactics are relatively straightforward: use magic to match their monks' mobility, *dispel magic* to remove the beneficial spells cast by their sorcerers, and strike hard and often to pound them into submission.



Russ Nicholson

Chapter 2: Githyanki Characters

Vinod Rams

This chapter includes full racial descriptions for githyanki and the half-githyanki/half-fiendish red dragons known as duthka'gith, information about classes and prestige classes for these characters, and new feats for their use—in short, everything you need to create a githyanki character and begin your conquest of Pharagos in the name of the Lich-Queen.

Githyanki

Githyanki are the descendants of a humanlike race enslaved by mind flayers for millennia. Exiled on the Astral Plane since time immemorial, they are returning to the Material Plane in a grand crusade at the Lich-Queen's command. Their target is a world called Pharagos, and their goal nothing less than the annihilation of every sentient creature that dares to dwell there. The player characters in *Knights of the Lich-Queen* are assumed to be part of this invading force. (See Chapter 5 for more information about the invasion.)

Personality: Githyanki are a living contradiction: ruthlessly cruel and sadistically violent toward almost all nongithyanki, but unfailingly polite, respectful, even refined among their own kind. The key to this paradox is their self-identity: the githyanki have never forgotten that they were slaves of the mind flayers for generations, and they blame everyone but themselves for that fact. A thousand years of hatred and resentment has corrupted the entire culture of the githyanki into a seething cauldron of violence directed toward anything that is not included in their own circle of fellows.

Physical Description: Githyanki appear superficially human, similar in size and proportion. Tall and gaunt, they average 6 1/4 feet tall and typically weigh around 170 pounds. They possess rough, leathery skin, pale yellow in color, and red or black hair (often pulled into one or more topknots). Their black eyes are sunken deep into their long, angular skulls, their noses are small and highly placed, and their ears are pointed and serrated in back. They favor elaborate dress and baroque armor.

Relations: The githyanki hate almost everyone. At the top of their list are the mind flayers who enslaved them and engendered the hatred that defines them, followed closely by their cousins, the githzerai. (See **A History of Hatred** in Chapter 1 for more information.) The denizens of the Lower Planes are perhaps the only creatures the githyanki ever count as allies: they have an ancient pact with a red dragon consort of Tiamat, and ally with demons and devils more often than with any other creature. "Good relations," to the githyanki, generally means "sharing a military alliance," and the quality of those relations shifts as quickly as fortunes in war.

Alignment: Githyanki are always evil, although they can be lawful, neutral, or chaotic in temper. Nonevil githyanki are one-in-a-million exceptions, and githyanki who stray so far from their heritage as to adopt a good alignment are completely unheard of.

Githyanki Lands: Githyanki are native to the Astral Plane, though their ancestors were humans from the Material Plane in ages past. They build fortress-cities on chunks of floating Astral rock or even on the corpses of dead deities that drift through that otherwise barren plane. They enjoy the conquest of other races and cultures, however, and have fortress-outposts established on many planes and many Material-Plane worlds. In addition to these overt sites, the githyanki maintain secret brood-chambers scattered throughout the Material Plane, and are quite adept at operating secretly among humans in particular.

Religion: Githyanki owe allegiance to their Lich-Queen alone, who forbids the worship of deities among her people. Indeed, as a race that often makes its homes on the corpses of dead gods, the githyanki are not inclined to revere these all-too-finite deities. See **The Great Taboo** in Chapter 2 for more information.

Language: Githyanki speak their own language, which they treat as a sacred secret, never using it around members of other races. They also speak Common, and many know Draconic as well. In general, githyanki disdain learning the languages of other creatures, with dragons, demons, and devils being the most common exceptions.

Names: Calli'tao, Geatroth, Gharvag, Karluth, Khlasath, Khosuvh, Madivh, N'a'rai, Quith, Rech, Ris'a'n, Tehv'in.

Adventurers: Githyanki rarely adventure in the way that humans, elves, dwarves, and other races typically understand that term. For githyanki, an adventure is a military operation, strictly regimented, led by a military commander, and ultimately directed by the Lich-Queen herself. It is not an opportunity for self-aggrandizement or the acquisition of personal wealth. Githyanki "adventurers," then, are soldiers in the army of the Lich-Queen, cooperating on missions to achieve her goals.

In the context of the invasion of Pharagos, most player character parties consist of scouting groups, skirmish forces, or tactical strike teams. See Chapter 5 for adventure suggestions and advice about running a campaign of this nature.

Githyanki Racial Traits

- +2 Dexterity, +2 Constitution, –2 Wisdom. Githyanki are hardy and agile, but their utter subservience to their Lich-Queen has weakened both their willpower and their sanity.
- Medium-size. As Medium-size creatures, githyanki have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.
- Githyanki base speed is 30 feet.
- Darkvision: Githyanki can see in the dark up to 60 feet.
- Psionics: 3/day—*daze humanoid* and *mage hand*. In addition, githyanki of 3rd level or higher can use *blur* three times per day, githyanki of 6th level or higher can use *dimension door* three times per day, and githyanki of 9th level or higher can use *telekinesis* three times per day and *plane shift* once per day. These abilities are as the spells cast by a sorcerer of the githyanki's level. The DCs of these abilities are Charisma based.
- Spell Resistance: A githyanki has spell resistance of 5 + 1 per character level.
- Extraplanar: Although Githyanki are humanoids, they are native to the Astral Plane and are thus susceptible to *banishment* and similar spells when they are on other planes.

Vital Statistics

Githyanki live roughly twice as long as humans, nearly 200 years, although their aging process is distorted by the timelessness of the Astral Plane. Since time does not pass on that plane, githyanki do not age—until they leave it. Eggs are hatched and young githyanki reared on the Material Plane (or, occasionally, one of several outer planes), and most githyanki spend the majority of their adult lives on the Astral Plane, not aging another day. As long as they remain on the Astral Plane, they could theoretically live forever, but as soon as they leave its timelessness the weight of years catches up with them instantaneously. Duthka'giths live 350 years on average.

Table 2–1: Random Starting Ages

Race	Adulthood	Barbarian Rogue Sorcerer	Bard Fighter Paladin Ranger	Cleric Druid Monk Wizard
Githyanki	20 years	+1d8	+2d6	+4d6
Duthka'gith	40 years	+3d6	+5d6	+7d6

Table 2–2: Aging Effects

Race	Middle Age*	Old**	Venerable†	Maximum Age
Githyanki	75 years	113 years	150 years	+4d20 years
Duthka'gith	125 years	188 years	250 years	+2d% years

* –1 to Str, Con, and Dex; +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.

** –2 to Str, Con, and Dex; +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.

† –3 to Str, Con, and Dex, +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.

Table 2–3: Random Height and Weight

Race	Base Height	Height Modifier	Base Weight	Weight Modifier
Githyanki, man	5' 4"	+2d10	115 lb.	× (2d4) lb.
Githyanki, woman	4' 11"	+2d10	80 lb.	× (2d4) lb.
Duthka'gith, man	5' 10"	+2d8	155 lb.	× (2d6) lb.
Duthka'gith, woman	5' 5"	+2d8	120 lb.	× (2d6) lb.

•Level Adjustment +2: Githyanki are more powerful than members of the standard races, and advance in levels more slowly. A githyanki's effective character level (ECL) is equal to his total class levels +2. Thus, a 1st-level githyanki fighter is considered a 3rd-level character and must earn 6,000 XP to reach 2nd level.

• Automatic Languages: Githyanki. Bonus Languages: Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal, and Undercommon.

• Favored Class: Fighter. A multiclass githyanki's fighter class does not count when determining whether he suffers an XP penalty for multiclassing.

Duthka'gith

In preparation for this invasion of Pharagos, Vlaakith the Lich-Queen has secretly been breeding a race of superwarriors—the duthka'gith. Half githyanki, the duthka'gith also claim descent from the seed of Ephelomon, the fiendish red dragon consort of Tiamat.

Personality: Duthka'giths are stronger, faster, and smarter than their githyanki parents, and they know it. They combine the cruel violence of the githyanki with the arrogance of dragons, and care little for the complex niceties of githyanki society. Where the githyanki are refined, the duthka'gith are boorish and savage. The threat of violence, obvious or implied, pollutes their every dealing, whether with outsiders (nongithyanki), fullblooded githyanki, or other duthka'gith.

Physical Description: Duthka'giths have lost most of the githyanki similarity to humans. They average close to 7 feet tall and are considerably heavier than githyanki, averaging more than 210 pounds. Their skin has a definite scaled texture to it and ranges from deep red (primarily on the shoulders and back) to orange (on the palms, soles of the feet, and belly). Their hair is shaggy and wild, resisting any attempt to pull it into the formal topknots the githyanki favor. Their ears are slightly larger in proportion to their heads than a githyanki's are, but share the same serrated back edge. Their eyes gleam red, suggesting glowing black embers.

Relations: Duthka'giths share all the enemies of the githyanki, which is to say almost everyone. Their relationship with the githyanki themselves varies from individual to individual, but generally is strained at best. The duthka'giths look down on the githyanki but work closely together with them. Every duthka'gith considers itself a born leader, which is not far from the truth, but as a result they quickly become frustrated when forced to accept an inferior position of any sort.

Alignment: Like githyanki, duthka'giths are always evil, and they tend strongly toward chaos (though not exclusively, because of Ephelomon's connection to the lawful plane of the Nine Hells).

Duthka'gith Lands: Duthka'giths have no lands of their own, and share living space with githyanki.

Religion: Like githyanki, duthka'giths are loyal to the Lich-Queen above all and consider the gods inferior, mortal beings undeserving of worship. Duthka'giths are not generally prone to the weakness of worship, but they tend to be particularly drawn to the messianic cult of Gith (see **The Great Taboo** in Chapter 3). In fact, many duthka'gith believe that Gith was transformed into a half-dragon during her stay in the Nine Hells, and that the breeding of the fist duthka'gith is a sign that Gith's return is imminent.

Language: Duthka'giths speak the githyanki language and Draconic. Many also speak Common, but they share the common githyanki disdain for the languages and culture of other species.

Names: Duthka'giths usually carry githyanki names.

Adventurers: Vlaakith bred the duthka'giths to lead the githyanki in the invasion—to serve as generals, sergeants, and champions of her mighty army. This vision has not fully materialized, thanks in large part to the unforeseen strongly chaotic bent of the duthka'giths. Duthka'giths are indeed born leaders, but many of them demonstrate such impatience with the regimentation of githyanki life that they strike out independently, sometimes forming small, elite units made up entirely of their own kind to attack Pharagos in their own way, sometimes working

Githyanki Language and Names

The githyanki language looks intimidating when transliterated, primarily because of the proliferation of apostrophes. An apostrophe is actually not pronounced, but simply represents the connection of separate morphemes into a single word. For example, in the title gish'sarath, the apostrophe connects two independent units of meaning: gish, or "skilled," meaning a githyanki who uses both weapons and spells, and sarath, a modification of sarth, usually translated as "sergeant," a commander of the smallest military unit in the githyanki armies. It is pronounced gish´-sahr-ath´, with no vocalization of the apostrophe except perhaps a slight pause.

Githyanki favor names with initial velar consonants such as C (pronounced farther back in the throat than K), G, GH (harder than a G), K, KH (like the Scottish ch in loch), and Q. Less commonly, names begin with M, N, R, S, T, TH, V, or VL. A githyanki's name has no linguistic meaning, but is a badge of honor. Githyanki do not tolerate others mispronouncing, abbreviating, or mocking their names. A githyanki who has had the privilege of training with a great hero of the race often adds his mentor's name to his own, adding the prefix gi'- ("student of") to the trainer's name. Students of the renowned swordsman Khlasath, for example, append gi'Khlasath to their own names. A student of Khlasath who dishonored his teacher's name by his performance in battle would stop using Khlasath's name or risk angering his teacher and every other student of his renowned teacher.

alone to wreak destruction on whatever they happen to find. In this way as in many others, duthka'giths manifest both the best and the worst aspects of their fiendish, draconic, and githyanki ancestry.

Duthka'gith Racial Traits

• +8 Strength, +2 Dexterity, +4 Constitution, +2 Intelligence, –2 Wisdom, +2 Charisma. Duthka'giths have the great physical strength and hardiness of their dragon parent, as well as the characteristics of the githyanki.
• Medium-size. As Medium-size creatures, duthka'giths have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.
• Duthka'gith base speed is 30 feet.
• Darkvision: Duthka'giths can see in the dark up to 60 feet.
• Low-light Vision: Duthka'giths can see twice as far as humans in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. They retain the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
• Psionics: 3/day—*daze humanoid* and *mage hand*. In addition, duthka'giths of 3rd level or higher can use *blur* three times per day, duthka'giths of 6th level or higher can use *dimension door* three times per day, and duthka'giths of 9th level or higher can use *telekinesis* three times per day and *plane shift* once per day. These abilities are as the spells cast by a sorcerer of the duthka'gith's level. The DCs of these abilities are Charisma based.
• Spell Resistance: A duthka'gith has spell resistance of 5 + 1 per character level.
• Dragon: Duthka'giths are creatures of the dragon type. This makes them vulnerable to certain spells and immune to others, including spells that specifically target humanoids. Like all dragons, they are immune to *sleep* and paralysis effects.
• Extraplanar: Duthka'giths are native to the Astral Plane and are thus susceptible to *banishment* and similar spells when they are on other planes.
• Breath Weapon (Su): Once per day, a duthka'gith can breathe a cone of fire to sear its enemies. This is a 30-foot cone that deals 6d8 points of fire damage to creatures within it. A successful Reflex save (DC 10 + the duthka'gith's Constitution modifier) reduces the damage by half.
• Natural Weapons: A duthka'gith can attack with its claws and bite. Its bite deals 1d6 points of damage (plus one-half the duthka'gith's Strength modifier), while its two claw attacks each deal 1d4 (plus the duthka'gith's Strength bonus).
• Natural Armor Bonus: +4.
• Smite Good (Su): Once per day, a duthka'gith can smite good, dealing extra damage equal to its character level against a good opponent.
• Energy Resistance: A duthka'gith is immune to fire and has cold resistance 5.
• Spell Resistance: A duthka'gith has spell resistance equal to 5 + its total character level, to a maximum of 25 at 20th level.
• Githyanki Blood: For all special abilities and effects, a duthka'gith is considered a githyanki. Duthka'giths, for example, are just as vulnerable to special effects that affect githyanki as their githyanki ancestors.
Duthka'giths also can qualify for prestige classes that require the githyanki race as a prerequisite.
• Level Adjustment +5: Duthka'giths are even more powerful than githyanki, and advance in levels more slowly. A duthka'gith's effective character level (ECL) is equal to his total class levels +5. Thus, a 1st-level duthka'gith fighter is considered a 6th-level character and must earn 21,000 XP to reach 2nd level.
• Automatic Languages: Githyanki and Common. Bonus Languages: Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic, Infernal.
• Favored Class: Fighter. A multiclass duthka'gith's fighter class does not count when determining whether he suffers an XP penalty for multiclassing.

Mercenaries for the Lich-Queen

The githyanki are not prone to alliances with any other race or organization. They are so strongly convinced of their own superiority, and so innately distrustful of nongithyanki, that the best relationship they can hope for with a potential ally is that of a mercenary. In fact, the githyanki often hire mercenary clerics devoted to evil gods in order to make up for their relative shortage of healing magic. Half-fiends are particularly common in this role. If your DM allows it, you can play a character of virtually any race serving as mercenaries in the Lich-Queen's armies, as long as you're willing to play the cleric.

Classes and Prestige Classes

Because of their absolute loyalty to their Lich-Queen, githyanki do not adopt the cleric or druid classes. It is not that they are incapable of divine spellcasting—githyanki rangers and blackguards can cast limited divine spells—but rather that the Lich-Queen forbids her subjects to rely on divine power rather than her own. A tiny handful of outcast githyanki clerics prove the rule by their exception: only by utterly abandoning githyanki society and the yoke of the Lich-Queen can a githyanki advance in these classes. Any other class is available to them, however, although fighters and wizards predominate among them.

Githyanki think more in terms of an individual's role in their culture of unceasing warfare than in terms of character class, and those roles fall into three categories: githwarriors, who engage in physical combat with melee or ranged weapons, or unarmed; warlocks, who use arcane spells to bombard the enemies of the githyanki; and gish, who use both techniques of warfare. Githwarriors include not only fighters, but also barbarians, monks, rangers, and rogues, and the githyanki make little distinction among members of those classes. Characters who multiclass within the githwarrior classes are still considered githwarriors, not gish: a fighter/barbarian or a monk/rogue still serves the same essential function in

battle as a single-classed character. Warlocks are both sorcerers and wizards: although the githyanki certainly recognize them as different approaches to arcane spellcasting, they share equal respect and serve equal functions in the githyanki armies. (If you use the *Psionics Handbook* in your game, psions are also considered warlocks.) Gish include multiclass characters with expertise in both combat roles, gith warrior and warlock. They are most commonly fighter/wizards, but monk/sorcerers and rogue/wizards are also gish. In addition, single-classed bards are considered gish because of their diversity of skills, blending weapon use and magical proficiency. (Likewise, if you use psionics in your game, single-classed psychic warriors are considered gish.)

Barbarian

Found only in certain githyanki settlements, barbarians are githwarriors with a rage ability called umitl'a'ikith, "touch of the sword spirit," named for the undead githyanki knights who sometimes animate the swords they used in life. This word suggests the mystical reverence with which the githyanki view raging barbarians, who—like the tl'a'ikith spirits—are unpredictable, even uncontrollable, but ferociously deadly in battle. Considering that the githyanki view martial skill as more important and valuable than actual accomplishment in battle, barbarians occupy a strange position: they command a great deal of respect, but rarely advance far in rank.

Game Rule Information: As described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Bard

Githyanki bards are rare, and where they do exist they are a far cry from the roguish minstrels of popular opinion. Their mixture of weapon skills and arcane spells makes them gish, serving the same function in war as the multiclass fighter/wizards who add spell support to martial prowess. Githyanki bards focus their arcane knowledge on battle spells, and use their inspiring abilities to lead warriors into the thick of melee combat. A few bards train to become ghustils (healers), preparing for that position with mastery of the bard's unusual arcane healing spells.

Game Rule Information: As described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Fighter

Fighters are the most common sort of martial githyanki, defining the essence of the githwarrior role. Fighters are the most skilled of warriors, as displayed in their mastery of combat feats, and thus earn the highest respect among the githwarriors. Most githyanki knights begin their careers as fighters, and the lower commanders of most military units are fighters as well.

Game Rule Information: As described in the *Player's Handbook*. In addition to the fighter feats detailed in the *Player's Handbook*, githyanki fighters can choose their bonus feats from among the feats marked as fighter feats in this chapter.

Monk

Often considered the exclusive province of the githzerai, monks exist among the githyanki as well. In a martial culture that so highly values ornate armor and weaponry, however, monks are not accorded anything near the respect that fighters claim. In fact, many githyanki suspect the monks in their midst of harboring traitorous sympathies for the githzerai. Be that as it may, githyanki monks hold a place among the disciplined fighting forces of the githwarriors, with small groups of monks often serving as guerrilla units or tactical strike teams, making excellent use of their mobility as well as their martial arts.

Game Rule Information: As described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Ranger

The essential military scouts and archers, githyanki rangers share the role of githwarriors despite their limited spellcasting ability. Githyanki rangers train extensively on the Material Plane (often serving as guards for egg hatcheries) in order to become as familiar as possible with its terrain and environmental conditions, so drastically different from their native plane.

Game Rule Information: As described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Gith Magic

This spell, developed by githyanki wizards, is useful against Material Plane natives who might try to hinder a githyanki's *dimension door* and *plane shift* abilities by means of spells such as dimensional anchor.

Freedom of Passage
Abjuration
Level: Sor/Wiz 8
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal or touch
Target: You or creature touched
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

As *freedom of movement*, but this spell also enables you or the creature you touch to pass through dimensional barriers, including those created by spells such as *forbiddance* and *dimensional lock*, assuming that you possess some means of dimensional travel that would otherwise be blocked by the barrier. The *freedom of passage* spell also allows you to move freely despite a *dimensional anchor* spell cast on you.

Focus: A githyanki *silver sword*.

Rogue

Githyanki rogues are skilled githwarriors who excel both in missions of stealth and in dirty fighting. Many githyanki rogues are multiclass fighters, and wear traditional githyanki armor except when their mission requires the use of stealth or other skills for which heavy armor would be inappropriate. These rogues fight side-by-side (or preferably in a flanking position) with fighters and other githwarriors, distinguished only by their particular skill set.

Game Rule Information: As described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Sorcerer

As arcane spellcasters, sorcerers belong to the warlock caste. Though sorcerers fill the same role as wizards, the githyanki view them as a completely different kind of spellcaster. As a society that pays careful attention to function and performance, the githyanki recognize the flexibility of sorcerers' casting as a great advantage, while likewise recognizing the severe limitations of their constrained spell selection. Unlike most other races, the githyanki rarely send a sorcerer to do a wizard's job, or vice versa. They value sorcerers for combat-heavy missions, where the best tactic is likely to involve blasting the enemy with *lightning bolt* after *lightning bolt*.

Like sorcerers among other races, githyanki sorcerers trace their power to dragon ancestry; specifically, to the same interbreeding of githyanki and fiendish red dragons that produced the first duthka'gith. Githyanki sorcerers often manifest monstrous features, largely cosmetic, reminiscent of their infernal draconic heritage.

Game Rule Information: As described in the *Player's Handbook*, except that a 1st-level sorcerer can choose the path of the duthka'ariy in lieu of the ability to acquire a familiar.

The Duthka'ariy: Sorcerers who choose this option manifest their draconic heritage as they advance levels, but they can never acquire a familiar. A sorcerer of the duthka'ariy gains the following benefits as he advances in level:

Sorcerer Level	Duthka'ariy Features
1–4	*Natural Weapons:* The character gains the benefit of the Improved Unarmed Strike feat. *Keen Senses:* The character gains the benefit of the Alertness feat.
5–8	*Natural Armor:* The character gains a natural armor bonus of +1.
9–12	*Keen Senses:* The character's darkvision extends to 120 feet
13–16	*Fire Focus:* The character casts fire spells at +1 caster level.
17–20	*Fire Resistance:* The character gains fire resistance 10.

Wizard

The githyanki value sorcerers highly for their ability to produce the same spell effect over and over. They value wizards, however, for their ability to produce just the spell needed for a specific occasion. The Lich-Queen (herself a wizard) sends other wizards on missions which require more than just magical artillery assaults—reconnaissance, breaking and entering, and even the occasional diplomatic foray (usually involving negotiations with demons or devils) are jobs that require a wizard's versatile hand.

Game Rule Information: As described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Assassin

Unlike many warrior cultures, githyanki give as much respect to the secret warriors of the shadows as they do to front-line fighters, and see no dishonor in killing an unwary opponent. Assassination is an important tactic in githyanki military operations, including the invasion of Pharagos. Military commanders, heads of state, advisers, and spellcasters are favorite targets of githyanki assassins.

Game Rule Information: As described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Blackguard

The greatest servants of the Lich-Queen are the githyanki knights, unholy warriors who hold the closest thing the githyanki have to a religious place in their godless society. These githyanki knights exclusively adopt the blackguard prestige class.

Game Rule Information: As described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, except that a githyanki (or duthka'gith) can qualify for the blackguard prestige class with 2 ranks in Knowledge (the planes) instead of Knowledge (religion). In addition, however, he must be accepted by the Lich-Queen as a knight in her service. This qualification is entirely up to the Dungeon Master to adjudicate, but the Lich-Queen does not accept any githyanki into the knighthood who has ever disobeyed her orders or failed on a mission in her name.

Blackweave Warlock

The blackweave is the githyanki term for negative energy, which they view as an essential component of all matter. The blackweave warlock is an arcane spellcaster who specializes in harnessing this energy, unleashing its powerfully destructive force on the enemies of the githyanki. At the cost of progressing in her knowledge of other schools of magic, the blackweave warlock becomes a master of necromancy, to the point where her entire body becomes suffused with negative energy and her touch is as deadly as that of the undead.

Many blackweave warlocks are sorcerers, though a number of necromancer wizards also choose to focus on necromancy so extensively. Although blackweave warlocks are very combat-focused (like all githyanki warlocks), they

almost never multiclass except with this class, choosing instead to attain the maximum development of their spellcasting ability.

Blackweave warlocks are not the sort of necromancers who hide in cemeteries performing grotesque experiments on corpses or undead. Rather, they are respected and feared members of the githyanki armies, marching into battle in the name of the Lich-Queen. In the current invasion, blackweave warlocks are valued for small-scale operations including raids and missions of assassination or terror.

Hit Die: d6.

Requirements

To qualify to become a blackweave warlock, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Githyanki.

Alignment: Any evil.

Skills: Knowledge (arcana) 9 ranks, Spellcraft 9 ranks.

Feats: Spell Focus (Necromancy).

Spellcasting: Able to cast *ray of exhaustion* and *vampiric touch*.

Special: In order to be accepted into the order of blackweave warlocks, a character must perform a sacrifice of a living, intelligent humanoid, using only magic to torture and then kill the victim.

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Class Skills

The blackweave warlock's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), and Spellcraft (Int).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the blackweave warlock prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Blackweave warlocks gain no proficiency with any weapons or armor.

Bonus Spells/Day: Similar to bonus spells for high ability scores, for each level of blackweave warlock that a spellcasting character attains, she gains bonus spells to the number of arcane spells per day she normally casts. These bonus spells can be added to whatever levels of spells the blackweave warlock can currently cast, but no more than one can be added to the character's highest current spell level. In addition, the character can never have more daily spells of a certain level than of a lower level (except cantrips). For example, Khosuvh is a 6th-level sorcerer who takes one level in blackweave warlock. He can give himself one bonus 3rd-level spell (his highest as a 6th-level sorcerer), and one bonus spell in one other level: 0, 1st, or 2nd.

If a blackweave warlock has two arcane spellcasting classes already, she must choose which previous spellcasting class gains each bonus spell. For example, Geatroth is a 6th-level sorcerer/3rd-level wizard, with one level of blackweave warlock. Conceivably, Geatroth could have a bonus 2nd-level wizard spell and a bonus 3rd-level sorcerer spell, or he could put both bonus spells in either sorcerer or wizard, but then only one of them could be his maximum spell level. Bonus spells cannot be added to a divine spellcasting class.

Once a blackweave warlock has chosen how to apply a given bonus spell, it cannot be shifted.

Additional Spells Known: If she was previously a sorcerer or bard, a blackweave warlock gains additional spells known with each level of blackweave warlock she attains. These additional spells known can be of any levels of spells the blackweave warlock can currently cast, but no more than one can be added to the character's current highest spell level. In addition, the character can never known more spells of a certain level than she does of a lower level (except cantrips). For example, Khosuvh is a 6th-level sorcerer who takes one level in blackweave warlock. He can learn one additional 3rd-level spell (his highest as a 6th-level sorcerer), and one bonus spell in any other level, 0 through 2nd.

Necromancer: A blackweave warlock adds her class level to any previous arcane spellcasting levels to determine her caster level for spells from the Necromancy school. For example, Khosuvh is a 6th-level wizard/3rd-level blackweave warlock. When casting Necromancy spells, his caster level is 9th; for all other spells it is 6th.

Table 2–4: The Blackweave Warlock

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Bonus Spells/Day	Additional Spells Known
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Necromancer, Weapon Focus	2	2
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Death touch 1/day	2	2
3	+2	+1	+1	+3	New spell level	3	1
4	+3	+1	+1	+4	Necromancer (+1)	2	2
5	+3	+1	+1	+4	Death touch 2/day	2	2
6	+4	+2	+2	+5	New spell level	3	1
7	+5	+2	+2	+5	Death ward	2	2
8	+6	+2	+2	+6	Death touch 3/day, necromancer (+2)	2	2
9	+6	+3	+3	+6	New spell level	3	1
10	+7	+3	+3	+7	Energy drain	2	2

For every 4 levels of blackweave warlock, the character's caster level for Necromancy spells increases by an additional +1. When Khosuvh reaches 4th level, his caster level increases to 10th for spells of the Necromancy school.

Weapon Focus: A blackweave warlock gains Weapon Focus as a bonus feat at 1st level. She can choose whether to apply the feat to rays or to touch spells.

Death Touch (Su): Starting at 2nd level, a blackweave warlock has the supernatural ability to slay living opponents with a single touch. She must succeed at a melee touch attack against the target. When she touches, she rolls 2d6 per warlock level. If the total at least equals the target's current hit points, it dies. This is a death effect.

A blackweave warlock can use this ability more often as she increases in levels, as shown on Table 2–4.

New Spell Level: When a blackweave warlock reaches 3rd level, and again when she reaches 6th level and 9th level, she gains the ability to cast spells of one level higher than she was previously able to cast. Initially, she can cast 0 spells of this level, but bonus spells (from a high ability score or her blackweave warlock bonus spells) can increase this number. She also initially knows 0 spells of this level (if she is a sorcerer or bard), so in order to cast any spells she must allocate her additional spell known to that level. For example, Khosuvh is a 6th-level sorcerer/2nd-level blackweave warlock. When he reaches 3rd level as a blackweave warlock, he gains the ability to cast 4th-level sorcerer spells. He must allocate one of his bonus spells to 4th level in order to cast any 4th-level spells, unless his Charisma is high enough (18 or higher) to give him a bonus 4th-level spell. He also must allocate his additional spell known to 4th level so that he has one spell to cast.

Death Ward (Su): At 7th level, a blackweave warlock gains immunity to negative energy and death attacks, as if constantly protected by a *death ward* spell.

Energy Drain (Su): At 10th level, a blackweave warlock's touch drains life energy, just like the touch of certain undead creatures. Living creatures hit by the warlock's touch attack receive two negative levels. The Fortitude save to remove the negative level has a DC of 20 + the warlock's Charisma modifier. (If the blackweave warlock has Weapon Focus with touch spells, it applies to this energy-draining touch as well.)

Ghustil

Ghustils are healers who are adept at manipulating the energies of the Astral plane into healing power. Since natural healing is impossible on their native plane, those few githyanki who can master healing spells—bards, rangers, and the ghustil—are vitally important to their warrior culture. A ghustil's healing abilities pale in com-

Table 2–5: The Ghustil

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Spells Per Day 1	2	3	4	5	6
1	+0	+2	+2	+2	5	—	—	—	—	—
2	+1	+3	+3	+3	6	3	—	—	—	—
3	+2	+3	+3	+3	6	4	—	—	—	—
4	+3	+4	+4	+4	6	5	3	—	—	—
5	+3	+4	+4	+4	6	6	4	—	—	—
6	+4	+5	+5	+5	6	6	5	3	—	—
7	+5	+5	+5	+5	6	6	6	4	—	—
8	+6	+6	+6	+6	6	6	6	5	3	—
9	+6	+6	+6	+6	6	6	6	6	4	—
10	+7	+7	+7	+7	6	6	6	6	5	3

parison to the clerics of other races, but they are beyond the reach of any bard or ranger, so their talents are greatly appreciated.

Ghustils generally begin their careers as wizards or bards (or psions, if you are using the *Psionics Handbook*), or sometimes as sorcerers. Few other classes bring the knowledge of arcane matters required for the ghustil's discipline.

Although they are primarily spellcasters, ghustils are not considered warlocks since they do not use their spells as weapons. Rather, they are part of the hr'a'cknir caste, along with experts and other craftspeople. Even so, they serve a crucial function in any military action, particularly such a large-scale action as the invasion of Pharagos, and at least one ghustil is found with every military unit of any size.

Hit Die: d6.

Requirements

To qualify to become a ghustil, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Githyanki.

Skills: Heal 4 ranks, Knowledge (arcana) 8 ranks, Knowledge (the planes) 8 ranks.

Feats: Skill Focus (Heal).

Spellcasting: Able to cast 2nd-level arcane spells.

Class Skills

The ghustil's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), and Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the ghustil prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Ghustils gain no proficiency with any weapons or armor.

Spells Per Day/Spells Known: Beginning at 1st level, a ghustil gains the ability to cast a number of spells. These spells are neither arcane nor divine, but are powered by the energies of the Astral Plane. To cast a spell, the ghustil must be on a plane that connects to the Astral Plane. (In the D&D cosmology, all planes connect to the Astral Plane, but an alternate cosmology might have a more limited Astral Plane.) Ghustils do not receive bonus spells, and saving throws against those few spells on their spell list that allow saving throws (cure spells against undead) have a DC of 10 + spell level + the bonus for the minimum Wisdom required to cast the spell, or 10 + spell level times 1 1/2. The ghustil's spell list appears below. A ghustil casts spells just as a bard does, except that his spells are neither arcane nor divine. A ghustil's caster level is equal to his class level plus his caster level in one other spellcasting class.

Ghustil Spell List

Ghustils choose their spells known from the following very limited list. A 10th-level ghustil knows every spell on the list except for one of the two 6th-level spells.

Table 2–6: Ghustil Spells Known

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	3	—	—	—	—	—
2	3	1	—	—	—	—
3	4	2	—	—	—	—
4	4	2	1	—	—	—
5	5	3	2	—	—	—
6	5	3	2	1	—	—
7	5	4	3	2	—	—
8	5	4	3	2	1	—
9	5	5	4	3	2	—
10	5	5	4	3	2	1

1st—*bless, cure light wounds, deathwatch, remove fear, shield of faith*

2nd—*aid, cure moderate wounds, delay poison, lesser restoration, remove paralysis*

3rd—*cure serious wounds, remove blindness/deafness, remove curse, remove disease*

4th—*cure critical wounds, mass cure light wounds, restoration*

5th—*mass cure moderate wounds, raise dead*

6th—*heal, mass cure serious wounds*

Gish Mindslayer

The githyanki have no greater enemy than the mind flayers who enslaved them for centuries when the race was born. Their entire culture, their very identity as a race, is built upon their hatred of the illithids, and among their greatest heroes are those who have distinguished themselves as illithid slayers. The gish mindslayer is dedicated to that mission, bringing both martial training and arcane mastery to the task of slaughtering mind flayers.

Gish mindslayers train in both a githwarrior class (often ranger, but sometimes fighter or even barbarian) and a warlock class (either wizard or sorcerer, almost never bard). Some also take rogue levels in order to benefit from a wide selection of skills and the ability to sneak attack.

Gish mindslayers often work alone or lead small groups to hunt and slay illithids. They have a strongly individualistic (they would say "self-reliant") streak, and do not excel in larger military operations.

The gish mindslayer is a nonpsionic version of the slayer prestige class detailed in the *Psionics Handbook*.

Hit Die: d8.

Requirements

To qualify to become a gish mindslayer, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Githyanki.

Base Attack Bonus: +3

Skills: Knowledge (underdark) 3 ranks, Survival 4 ranks.

Feats: Martial Weapon Proficiency (all), Track.

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Spellcasting: Able to cast 2nd-level arcane spells.

Special: Must have killed an illithid, either individually or as part of a group of no more than six.

Class Skills

The gish mindslayer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Knowledge (underdark) (Int), Listen (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis), and Survival (Wis).

Table 2–7: The Gish Mindslayer

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spellcasting
1	+1	+0	+0	+2	Favored enemy (illithid), illithid sense	—
2	+2	+0	+0	+3	Brain nausea	+1 level of existing class
3	+3	+1	+1	+3	Bonus feat	+1 level of existing class
4	+4	+1	+1	+4	Lucid buffer	—
5	+5	+1	+1	+4	Bonus feat	+1 level of existing class
6	+6	+2	+2	+5	Cerebral blind	—
7	+7	+2	+2	+5	Bonus feat	+1 level of existing class
8	+8	+2	+2	+6	Breach spell resistance	—
9	+9	+3	+3	+6	Bonus feat	+1 level of existing class
10	+10	+3	+3	+7	Blast feedback	+1 level of existing class

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the gish mindslayer prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Gish mindslayers gain no proficiency with any weapons or armor.

Spellcasting: At 2nd level, and certain levels beyond 2nd, a gish mindslayer gains new spells per day and spells known as if he had also gained a level in an arcane spellcasting class to which he belonged before adding the prestige class level. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained, though he does retain the ability to exchange spells known with every even-numbered equivalent sorcerer or bard level. If the character had more than one arcane spellcasting class before becoming a gish mindslayer, the player must decide to which class to add each gish mindslayer level for the purpose of determining spells per day and spells known.

Favored Enemy (Ex): A gish mindslayer has extensively studied illithids and their ways, and gains bonuses when fighting, tracking, or otherwise dealing with them. He gains a +2 bonus to Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Survival checks when using these skills against mind flayers. Likewise, he gets a +2 bonus to weapon damage rolls against them.

If the mindslayer already had a favored enemy from another source (such as levels in the ranger class), his bonus against any one selected favored enemy (including illithids, if he desires) increases by +2. If aberrations are among his favored enemies, his bonuses against illithids stack with the bonuses he receives against all aberrations.

Illithid Sense (Su): A gish mindslayer senses the presence of illithids within 60 feet of himself, even if they are hidden by darkness, walls, or invisibility. He cannot determine their exact location, distance, or even direction, just the fact of their presence.

Brain Nausea (Su): A 2nd-level gish mindslayer has a constant supernatural defense against an illithid's most grisly attack. Any creature that attempts to eat the mindslayer's brain must succeed at a Will save (DC 17) or become disinclined to do so. Illithids in particular are free to take any action when affected by this ability, except actually extracting the mindslayer's brain to eat it. This ability is active as long as the mindslayer is alive, even if he is unconscious, stunned, or otherwise helpless.

Bonus Feats: At 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th level, a gish mindslayer gains a bonus metamagic or fighter feat.

Lucid Buffer (Su): At 4th level, a gish mindslayer becomes especially skilled at resisting mental attacks. He receives a +4 competence bonus on saving throws against all compulsions and mind-affecting effects. He also receives a +2 competence bonus on saving throws against psionic attacks such as an illithid's *mind blast* attack.

Cerebral Blind (Sp): On reaching 6th level, a gish mindslayer can "riposte" a mental attack. Whenever he succeeds at a saving throw against a compulsion, other mind-affecting effect, or psionic attack, the attacker must immediately make a Will save against the DC of the original attack. On a failure, the attacker is dazed for 1 round from the mental backlash.

Breach Spell Resistance (Su): Upon reaching 8th level, a gish mindslayer has the ability to enhance any weapon he wields so that it erodes the spell resistance of any creature it strikes. Each successful attack he makes against a creature with spell resistance temporarily reduces the creature's SR by 1. If the creature survives, lost spell resistance returns at a rate of 1 point per 12 hours.

Blast Feedback (Su): A 10th-level gish mindslayer is able to turn an illithid's most dangerous attack back upon it. Whenever he is in the area of a *mind blast*, he can forego his saving throw in order to channel the blast energy back at the illithid producing it. Rather than being stunned, he takes 3d4 points of temporary Charisma damage. The illithid must then make its own Will save against the DC of its *mind blast*. If it fails, it is stunned for 1 round and cannot use another *mind blast* for 3d4 rounds.

Holocaust Warrior

Some attribute it to their ancient pact with red dragons, while others just chalk it up to pyromania, but certain githyanki gish are particularly adept with the magic of fire. The holocaust warrior is the perfect example: a gish who hurls fireballs between swings of his flaming greatsword. In the martial philosophy of the githyanki, fire is a symbol of the consuming power of the githyanki race, which will soon destroy all other races and burn triumphantly through eternity.

Holocaust warriors are always gish, learning both martial skills and spells, focusing on evocation and fire magic. Many holocaust warriors are fighter/sorcerers, while many others are fighter/wizards. A few barbarian/sorcerers become holocaust warriors, but most holocaust warriors are highly disciplined and well-trained fighters, not rampaging berserkers. Gish with other martial classes rarely become holocaust warriors.

In githyanki military units, holocaust warriors are found with the other gish—marching in their own units to fight with flaming sword and fiery spell as the need arises. Holocaust warriors often lead units of other gish, simply by virtue of their high level.

Hit Die: d8.

Requirements

To qualify to become a holocaust warrior, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Githyanki.

Alignment: Any evil.

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Base Save Bonuses: Fort +4, Will +4.

Skills: Concentration 6 ranks.

Table 2–8: The Holocaust Warrior

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Bonus Spells/Day	Additional Spells Known
1	+0	+2	+0	+2	Incinerator, improved combat casting	2	2
2	+1	+3	+0	+3	Flaming weapon (1/day), armored casting	2	2
3	+2	+3	+1	+3	New spell level	3	1
4	+3	+4	+1	+4	Fire resistance 10	2	2
5	+3	+4	+1	+4	Flaming weapon (2/day, burst)	2	2
6	+4	+5	+2	+5	New spell level	3	1
7	+5	+5	+2	+5	Fire immunity	2	2
8	+6	+6	+2	+6	Flaming weapon (3/day)	2	2
9	+6	+6	+3	+6	New spell level	3	1
10	+7	+7	+3	+7	Burn	2	2

Feats: Combat Casting, Martial Weapon Proficiency (all), Spell Focus (Evocation).

Spellcasting: Able to cast *fireball*.

Special: Must be reduced below 0 hit points by fire and then revived, usually in a ritual of initiation (but sometimes on the battlefield).

Class Skills

The holocaust warrior's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), and Spellcraft (Int).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the holocaust warrior prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Holocaust warriors gain no proficiency with any weapons or armor.

Bonus Spells/Day: Similar to bonus spells for high ability scores, for each level of holocaust warrior that a spellcasting character attains, he gains bonus spells to the number of arcane spells per day he normally casts. These bonus spells can be added to whatever levels of spells the holocaust warrior can currently cast, but no more than one can be added to the character's highest current spell level. In addition, the character can never have more daily spells of a certain level than of a lower level (except cantrips). For example, Tharanh is a 4th-level fighter/6th-level sorcerer who takes one level in holocaust warrior. She can give herself one bonus 3rd-level spell (her highest as a 6th-level sorcerer), and one bonus spell in any other level, 0 through 2nd.

If a holocaust warrior has two arcane spellcasting classes already, he must choose which previous spellcasting class gains each bonus spell. For example, Hostiath is a 5th-level fighter/6th-level sorcerer/5th-level wizard, with one level of holocaust warrior. Conceivably, Hostiath could have a bonus 3rd-level wizard spell and a bonus 3rd-level sorcerer spell, or he could put both bonus spells in either sorcerer or wizard, but then only one of them could be 3rd level. Bonus spells cannot be added to a divine spellcasting class.

One a holocaust warrior has chosen how to apply a given bonus spell, it cannot be shifted.

Additional Spells Known: If he was previously a sorcerer or bard, a holocaust warrior gains additional spells known with each level of holocaust warrior he attains. These additional spells known can be of any levels of spells the holocaust warrior can currently cast, but no more than one can be added to the character's current highest spell level. In addition, the character can never known more spells of a certain level than he does of a lower level (except cantrips). For example, Tharanh is a 4th-level fighter/6th-level sorcerer who takes one level in holocaust warrior. She can learn one additional 3rd-level

spell (her highest as a 6th-level sorcerer), and one bonus spell in any other level, 0 through 2nd.

Incinerator: A holocaust warrior uses his character level as his caster level for all fire spells. For example, Tharanh is a 4th-level fighter/6th-level sorcerer/3rd-level holocaust warrior. When casting fire spells, her caster level is 13th; for all other spells it is 6th.

Improved Combat Casting (Ex): If a holocaust warrior fails a Concentration check to cast a spell defensively, he can choose either to lose the spell (as normal) or to cast it anyway, provoking an attack of opportunity as normal. In addition, he gains a +4 dodge bonus to his AC against any attack of opportunity he provokes by casting a spell.

Flaming Weapon (Su): At 2nd level, a holocaust warrior gains the ability to wreathe a melee weapon in flames once per day, as a free action. The flames last for 1 round per character level, and deal an extra 1d6 points of fire damage whenever the weapon successfully hits. The holocaust warrior can apply this ability to melee or ranged weapons; projectile weapons transfer the *flaming* quality to their ammunition.

At 5th level, the holocaust warrior can use this ability twice per day. In addition, the weapon becomes a *flaming burst* weapon, dealing 1d6 points of bonus fire damage on a normal hit, or 1d10 points on a successful critical hit. At 8th level, the character can use this ability three times per day.

Armored Casting (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, a holocaust warrior reduces the arcane spell failure chance for casting spells in armor by 10%.

New Spell Level: When a holocaust warrior reaches 3rd level, and again when he reaches 6th level and 9th level, he gains the ability to cast spells of one level higher than he was previously able to cast. Initially, he can cast 0 spells of this level, but bonus spells (from a high ability score or his holocaust warrior bonus spells) can increase this number. He also initially knows 0 spells of this level (if he is a sorcerer or bard), so in order to cast any spells he must allocate his additional spell known to that level. For example, Tharanh is a 10th-level sorcerer/2nd-level holocaust warrior. When she reaches 3rd level as a holocaust warrior, she gains the ability to cast 6th-level sorcerer spells. She must allocate one of her bonus spells to 6th level in order to cast any 6th-level spells, unless her Charisma is high enough (22 or higher) to give her a bonus 6th-level spell. She also must allocate her additional spell known to 6th level so that she has one spell to cast.

Fire Resistance/Immunity (Ex): At 4th level, a holocaust warrior gains fire resistance 10. He ignores the first 10 points of fire damage dealt by each attack. At 7th level, a holocaust warrior becomes immune to fire altogether.

Burn (Su): When he reaches 10th level, a holocaust warrior turns every weapon he wields into a *flaming* weapon (and he can still use his *flaming* weapon three times per day to make a weapon a *flaming burst* weapon). Any creature hit by his weapon attack also must succeed at a Reflex save (DC 20 + the holocaust warrior's Constitution modifier) or catch fire. The flame burns for 1d4 rounds (see Catching on Fire in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). A burning creature can take a move-equivalent action to put out the flame.

Creatures hitting a holocaust warrior with natural weapons or unarmed attacks take 1d6 points of fire damage as though hit by his attack, and also catch fire unless they succeed at a Reflex save.

Sword Stalker

Sword stalkers are trained specialists with only one purpose: recovering *silver swords* lost by other githyanki and hunting down the fools who take them. Able to hunt such thieves even across planar boundaries, sword stalkers are the superlative trackers and scouts of the githyanki race.

Most sword stalkers are gish (multiclass fighter/wizards or ranger/wizards), since their diversity of skills makes them best suited for the dangerous missions they undertake. Ranger/wizards are well suited to the role, building on their existing tracking ability to become masterful planar stalkers. Fighter/wizards and occasionally barbarian/wizards also become sword stalkers. For some reason, sorcerers are not typically drawn to the class, though there are certainly exceptions.

Unlike most gish, sword stalkers tend to operate with a high degree of independence, and often have no formal connection to the armies of the Lich-Queen. Often a single sword stalker leads a small band of adventurous githwar-

Table 2–9: The Sword Stalker

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+2	+2	Improved Alertness, locate object
2	+2	+3	+3	+3	Smite swordthief (1/day)
3	+3	+3	+3	+3	Astral tracking
4	+4	+4	+4	+4	Smite swordthief (2/day)
5	+5	+4	+4	+4	*Scry sword*
6	+6	+5	+5	+5	Smite swordthief (3/day)
7	+7	+5	+5	+5	
8	+8	+6	+6	+6	Smite swordthief (4/day)
9	+9	+6	+6	+6	
10	+10	+7	+7	+7	*Discern location*, smite swordthief (5/day)

riors, warlocks, and gish on a hunt; much more rarely, a troupe of sword stalkers works together to find a very important *silver sword*.

Hit Die: d10.

Requirements

To qualify to become a sword stalker, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Githyanki.

Alignment: Any evil.

Base Attack Bonus: +6.

Skills: Knowledge (the planes) 8 ranks, Survival 7 ranks.

Feats: Alertness, Track.

Spellcasting: Able to cast 3rd-level arcane spells.

Special: Must have recovered a *silver sword* from a non-githyanki.

Class Skills

The sword stalker's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the sword stalker prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Sword stalkers gain no proficiency with any weapons or armor.

Improved Alertness (Ex): A sword stalker gains an additional +2 bonus on Listen and Spot checks, which stacks with the bonus from the Alertness feat.

Locate Object (Sp): A sword stalker can use *locate object* at will, but can only use it to locate a *silver sword*. Her effective caster level is her class level +2.

Smite Swordthief (Su): Once per day, a sword stalker of at least 2nd level can smite an opponent who has stolen a *silver sword*. The sword stalker gains a +4 bonus on her attack roll and adds her class level to her damage roll. If the sword stalker accidentally smites someone who has never stolen a *silver sword*, the smite has no effect, but it is still used up for that day.

For every 2 levels the sword stalker attains beyond 1st, she can smite a swordthief one additional time per day.

Astral Tracking (Su): A 3rd-level sword stalker can attempt to track normally even through the featureless wastes of the Astral Plane (base DC 25). In addition, when standing at the location (on any plane) where someone departed by means of a *teleportation* spell, the sword stalker can attempt to determine the destination of the spell. This requires a Survival check against a DC of 30; if successful, the sword stalker can *dimension door* to the same location, if it is within range.

Scry Sword (Sp): A 5th-level sword stalker can *scry* as a spell-like ability at will. This ability works like the *greater scrying* spell, except that the sword stalker can only target a *silver sword*, not a creature. If the *silver sword* is in a creature's possession, the creature makes a saving throw as normal, but automatically suffers a –4 penalty on the save because of the sword stalker's connection to one of the creature's possessions.

Discern Location (Sp): At 10th level, a sword stalker gains the ability to use *discern location* as a spell-like ability, three times per day, as a 16th-level sorcerer. This ability only works to locate a *silver sword*.

Feats

The following feats are unique to the githyanki. At the Dungeon Master's discretion, characters of other races and kinds who qualify for these feats might be allowed to take them, but with only a single exception (Improved Spell Resistance) these feats represent the special training given to githwarriors, warlocks, and gish in the service of the Lich-Queen.

Double Blade Whirlwind [General]

You can use a double-bladed weapon in a raging flurry of blows.

Prerequisites: Weapon Focus (any two-bladed weapon), Two-Weapon Fighting, base attack bonus +3.

Benefit: When you use the full attack action while wielding a two-bladed weapon (any double weapon with two slashing ends, including the two-bladed sword, orc double axe, double crescent blade, githyanki double scythe, githyanki scythe-sword, and githyanki double scimitar) with which you have the Weapon Focus feat, you may make one extra attack in a round at your highest base attack, but this attack and each other attack made that round suffer a –2 penalty apiece. This penalty applies for 1 round, so it affects attacks of opportunity you might make before your next action. You may choose which end of the weapon you use to make the extra attack.

Special: A fighter may select this feat as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Greater Combat Reflexes [General]

You react to any drop in your opponents' guard with blinding speed.

Prerequisites: Combat Reflexes, Improved Combat Reflexes, Dex 15, base attack bonus +11.

Benefit: For any given opportunity in melee combat, you can make two attacks of opportunity. The second attack is at a –5 penalty, just like your second normal attack in any given round. You still cannot exceed your normal maximum number of attacks of opportunity in a round.

Special: A fighter may select this feat as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Greater Disarm [General]

You can follow through on a disarm to strike your disarmed opponent.

Prerequisites: Int 13, Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm.

Benefit: If you successfully disarm an opponent in melee combat, you immediately get a melee attack against that opponent as if you hadn't used your attack for the disarm action. For example, at 11th level, the githwarrior Gharvag gets three attacks at base attack bonuses of +11, +6, and +1. In the current round, he attempts to disarm his opponent. His first attempt fails (using his first attack). His second attack successfully disarms the foe, and he immediately makes a melee attack against his

opponent with a base attack of +6. Finally, he takes his last attack at +1.

Special: A fighter may select this feat as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Greater Psionic Teleportation [General]

You have greatly honed and improved one of your innate psionic abilities.

Prerequisites: Psionic *dimension door* ability, Psionic Teleportation, character level 12.

Benefit: You can use *greater teleport* as a spell-like psionic ability, as the spell cast by a sorcerer of your level. This replaces your psionic *teleport* ability, and you can use it the same number of times per day.

Greater Sunder [General]

You can follow through on a sunder attack to smite the weapon's wielder.

Prerequisites: Str 13, Power Attack, Improved Sunder.

Benefit: If you destroy an opponent's weapon with the sunder action in melee combat, you immediately get a melee attack against that opponent as if you hadn't used your attack for the sunder action. For example, at 11th level, the githwarrior Gharvag gets three attacks at base attack bonuses of +11, +6, and +1. In the current round, he attempts to sunder his opponent's weapon. His first attempt hits the weapon but does not destroy it. His second attack finishes off the weapon, and he immediately makes a melee attack against his opponent with a base attack of +6. Finally, he takes his last attack at +1.

Special: A fighter may select this feat as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Improved Combat Casting [General]

You have mastered the art of casting spells in combat.

Prerequisite: Combat Casting, Concentration 7 ranks.

Benefit: If you fail your Concentration check to cast on the defensive, you do not lose the spell you were attempting to cast. You can choose either to abort your casting attempt and retain the spell, or to cast anyway, provoking an attack of opportunity as though you had not attempted to cast defensively.

Normal: If you fail an attempt to cast on the defensive, you lose the spell.

Improved Combat Reflexes [General]

You react to any drop in your opponents' guard with lightning speed.

Prerequisites: Combat Reflexes, Dex 13, base attack bonus +6.

Benefit: For any given opportunity in melee combat, you can make two attacks of opportunity. The second attack is at a –5 penalty, just like your second normal attack in any given round. You still cannot exceed your normal maximum number of attacks of opportunity in a round.

Improved Spell Resistance [General]

You are particularly resistant to magic.

Prerequisite: Spell resistance.

Benefit: Your spell resistance increases by +2.

Nightmare Steed [General]

You have a nightmare companion that you can ride into battle.

Prerequisite: Fiendish servant class ability.

Benefit: You can replace your fiendish servant with a nightmare, as described in the *Monster Manual*. The nightmare gains the same improvement to its Hit Dice, Strength, and other abilities that your fiendish servant would have gained, based on your level. If your nightmare dies, you can replace it in the same way that you would replace another fiendish servant.

Psionic Displacement [General]

You have honed and improved one of your innate psionic abilities.

Prerequisites: Psionic *blur* ability, character level 5.

Benefit: You can use *displacement* as a spell-like psionic ability, as the spell cast by a sorcerer of your level. This replaces your psionic *blur* ability, and you can use it the same number of times per day.

Psionic Invisibility [General]

You have greatly honed and improved one of your innate psionic abilities.

Prerequisites: Psionic *blur* ability, Psionic Displacement, character level 9.

Benefit: You can use *greater invisibility* as a spell-like psionic ability, as the spell cast by a sorcerer of your level. This replaces your psionic *displacement* ability, and you can use it the same number of times per day.

Psionic Teleportation [General]

You have honed and improved one of your innate psionic abilities.

Prerequisites: Psionic *dimension door* ability, character level 9.

Benefit: You can use *teleport* as a spell-like psionic ability, as the spell cast by a sorcerer of your level. This replaces your psionic *dimension door* ability, and you can use it the same number of times per day.

Silver Cord Strike [General]

You specialize in severing the silver cords of astral travelers.

Prerequisites: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*silver sword*), Power Attack.

Benefit: When you strike at an astral traveler's silver cord, you do not provoke an attack of opportunity. You also gain a +4 bonus to any attack roll made to attack a creature's silver cord.

Normal: A character who doesn't have this feat incurs an attack of opportunity when he strikes at a creature's silver cord.

Special: A fighter may select this feat as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Spell on the Run [General]

You are trained in using spells in the rush of melee while remaining light on your feet.

Prerequisites: Dex 13, Dodge, Mobility, base attack bonus +4 or higher, Spring Attack.

Benefit: When casting a spell with a casting time of 1 standard action or less, you can move both before and after casting the spell, provided that your total distance moved is not greater than your speed. You can't use this feat if you are in heavy armor.

You must move at least 5 feet both before and after you cast your spell in order to utilize the benefits of Spell on the Run.

Sweeping Blade Mastery [Martial Arts Style]

You have mastered the githyanki combat style known as Sweeping Blade, emphasizing grand motions and intricate flourishes of a long-bladed weapon.

This is not a feat, but a martial arts style. Any githyanki character who has learned all the prerequisite feats of this style gains the benefit of the style without spending an additional feat slot.

Prerequisites: Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Disarm, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Weapon Focus (any slashing weapon), Balance 4 ranks.

Benefit: You can use a slashing weapon that you have Weapon Focus in to deflect ranged attacks as though you had the Deflect Arrows feat. Unlike the normal use of that feat, you need not have a hand free; rather, you must be holding your blade. You cannot use this ability when wielding a light weapon, a weapon that is not a slashing weapon, or a simple weapon of any kind.

The Great Reward

The Lich-Queen Vlaakith devours the soul of any githyanki who reaches 17th level. In an arcane ritual, she incorporates the slain githyanki's life essence into her own, increasing her own power and longevity while simultaneously obliterating a potential rival to her position of absolute authority over the entire race. The power she gains from this practice has undoubtedly contributed to making her the greatest ruler the githyanki race has ever known, but the true secret to her success is that she has convinced her people to desire this fate. A githwarrior, warlock, or gish longs for nothing more, and hopes for no greater reward, than to earn sweet oblivion as part of the Lich-Queen's essence. Other castes are not exempt from this reward, but few mlar reach 17th level as nonadventuring NPCs.

A githyanki who flees this fate earns the undying enmity of a very powerful foe, a wizard and a lich of no less than 25th level, with literal armies at her command. Vlaakith usually sends a party of four 16th-level knights and warlocks in search of any githyanki who flees her final embrace, armed with the best gear possible (equipped as PCs, not NPCs) and mounted, if traveling to a plane other than the Astral Plane, on mature adult fiendish red dragons. These hunters have orders to kill the fugitive first, then capture his essence by means of a scroll of *soul bind* that Vlaakith provides for them (since no githyanki can cast that 9th-level spell). This is viewed as fitting punishment, denying the renegade the pleasure of Vlaakith draining his soul while still providing her the life essence she craves.

Niklas Janssen

Chapter 3: Culture and Gear

The githyanki have an ancient civilization, their history stretching back past the beginning of most worlds' records. Dwelling in the timeless Astral Plane and united over the millennia by the rule of a mere handful of Lich-Queen rulers, githyanki culture remains true to its ancient roots and has changed only very slowly over the eons. Now as at their founding, the githyanki are a race defined by their hatreds—their shared loathing of the illithids and the githzerai—and structured as an army ready at any instant to strike out against their enemies.

Attila Adorjany

Social Order and Disorder

The githyanki are uniformly evil, but individuals are as often lawful as chaotic evil. Their society is probably best described as neutral evil, with a militaristic regimentation balanced by a strong ethic of individual freedom and personal achievement, focused above all toward ends of hatred and death.

As a result of their racial origin as slaves of the mind flayers, githyanki place an extremely high value on freedom. More lawfully-inclined githyanki emphasize the freedom of the githyanki as a race, swearing that the race shall never again be subjugated to other powers while also stressing the need for individual githyanki to forfeit at least some of their own personal freedom for the greater benefit of the race. Githyanki who lean more toward chaos argue that personal enslavement to the githyanki race as a whole is little better than servitude to the mind flayers, and stress every individual githyanki's right to live free of oppressive regulation. Most githyanki live content in a middle ground between the two extremes, finding their own balance between subservience to their race and personal freedom.

Regardless of alignment, all githyanki share a personal abhorrence of the concept of slavery or captivity. Few githyanki would ever consider surrender as an option in a losing fight, vastly preferring death to the possibility of enslavement or imprisonment. As if the fear of enslavement weren't enough, failure on a mission is considered a capital crime, barely short of betraying the Lich-Queen, so surrender is equivalent to death in any case. Githyanki are happy to fight to the death. Conversely, they frequently take captives in battle, and sometimes use prisoners of war as slave laborers, but they do not enslave others on a permanent basis.

Closely related to this hatred of servitude is the strong githyanki sense of individuality. Each githyanki strives to create her own unique style, expressed through the ornamentation of her armor and weapons, the style of her hair and the adornment she wears, and even in her particular combat maneuvers. What appears to be a regimented line of githwarriors marching toward an enemy force breaks into something like uncontrolled chaos when it meets the enemy, with each warrior expressing his individuality through his own combat maneuvers, steps, flourishes of his blade, and battle cries. This sense of individual uniqueness is somewhat muted among lawful githyanki, but it never vanishes even among those most committed to law and order.

Similarly, githyanki are committed to a set of individual freedoms which, though not codified in anything like a Bill of Rights, are valued by all githyanki regardless of alignment. A githyanki believes he is free to speak his mind no matter how unsettling his opinion might be, although most githyanki avoid taboo subjects such as religion or rebellion because they are considered socially unacceptable. Githyanki believe they are free to do as they please within the privacy of their homes, and would be shocked at any intrusion upon that privacy. Further, even the military regime of the githyanki allows soldiers and ordinary citizens alike to travel as they please without giving an account of their comings and goings.

At the other end of the scale, the lawful nature of githyanki society is most clearly manifested in the autocratic rule of the Lich-Queen and the governors (often called Supreme Leaders) who oversee each city and outpost in her name. Although not given to creating extensive and elaborate codes of laws, these rulers hold absolute power over the communities they govern. Githyanki respect authority, particularly when it takes the form of a 25th-level lich wizard or a high-level knight who carries the Lich-Queen's personal seal. Disobeying a knight amounts to treason against the Lich-Queen, one of many capital crimes. In the absence of lengthy legal codes, githyanki settlements adopt a set of Articles that simply and clearly spell out forbidden activities. These usually include prohibitions against harming or killing githyanki, stealing from githyanki, capturing a githyanki or forcing one into servitude, and similar common-sense sorts of rules. Without exception, however, these rules only apply when the victim is a githyanki. Even in a cosmopolitan place like the city of Githmir, where small numbers of evil humans, fiends, and other races live in ghettoes, githyanki rules prohibit no act committed against nongithyanki. A githyanki—or another human—can slay a human in a githyanki city with no reason or provocation and need not fear punishment from the githyanki. These ghettoes, however, have their own codes of law. While ghetto residents have no jurisdiction over githyanki, they can and do punish their own citizens for crimes against each other.

Githyanki are also sharply divided into castes that are based on an individuals' function within githyanki society. These castes are not hereditary nor do they severely limit what their members can do. No law or social stigma prevents a githwarrior, for example, from associating with a hr'a'cknir commoner. For practical reasons, however, members of any caste usually associate primarily with others of their own caste. Since there are no githyanki families, the child of a hr'a'cknir can easily grow to become a knight if his ability and skill prove great enough. Also, the castes are not arranged in any hierarchy: warlocks and mlar are equally valued for their different contributions to githyanki society. To an extent, the castes correspond with character classes, but (as described in Chapter Two) the correlation is hardly exact.

Githwarriors

Those githyanki who serve the Lich-Queen by wielding weapons in her armies are known as githwarriors. The ranks of the githwarriors include many fighters and warriors, but also barbarians, monks, rangers, and rogues, as well as characters who multiclass within the githwarrior classes, such as fighter/rogues.

Gradations within the githwarrior caste correspond to military ranks in the Lich-Queen's armies. Accomplished githwarriors can aspire to the rank of sarth, or "sergeant," and gain command over a small unit of soldiers. A sarth is usually at least 6th level and spends a feat slot on Leadership as part of his promotion. A typical sarth commands a squad of 4 to 6 lower-level githwarriors. As a sarth, a githwarrior can be promoted further to the rank of kith'rak, or "captain," and assume command over several squads with their sarths. A kith'rak is usually at least 12th level.

Githwarriors usually wear medium to heavy armor in the baroque styles unique to the githyanki. Common soldiers usually wear beaded armor (detailed under Armor, below), while sarths wear breastplates, splint mail, or banded mail. Kith'raks wear half-plate or full plate. All githwarriors favor large-bladed weapons, including greatswords, bastard swords, longswords, scimitars, halberds, glaives, scythes, and various double-bladed versions of these weapons. They typically carry crossbows for ranged attacks.

Knights

The githyanki knights are the most respected and feared members of githyanki society. Combining martial prowess with a mastery of unholy power unknown among any other githyanki, knights are the loyal servants of the Lich-Queen, acting as her eyes, ears, and swords. Every githyanki city, fortress, and outpost is governed by a knight who usually reports directly to the Lich-Queen. Every mission of importance on any plane is led by a knight. They are the objects of reverence, fear, and awe, as the concrete manifestations of the Lich-Queen's will everywhere the githyanki exist. For all that, however, they are not truly a caste of their own; rather, they are the highest echelon of the githwarriors.

Every githyanki knight is a blackguard; among the githyanki the terms are synonymous. A githyanki cannot become a blackguard unless he has proven himself worthy of serving the Lich-Queen, and no githwarrior can become a knight unless he qualifies for the blackguard prestige class.

A knight's badge of office is his *silver sword*, granted by the Lich-Queen to every knight upon his admission to the order. Knights almost always wear full plate armor, and sometimes ride nightmares, fiendish horses, or fiendish red dragons into battle.

Warlocks

Warlocks serve the armies of the Lich-Queen through spellcasting, and include both sorcerers and wizards (as

well as psions, if you use psionics in your game). Most warlocks are simply warriors who wield magic instead of weapons, focusing their studies on damaging evocations and conjurations such as *magic missile*, *Melf's acid arrow*, *fireball*, *lightning bolt*, and *ice storm*. Some warlocks focus on necromantic spells, and the most dedicated of these adopt the blackweave warlock prestige class described in Chapter Two.

Githyanki armies do not usually contain entire units of warlocks. Instead, a low-level warlock (1st to 6th level) is typically attached to each squad as sort of an adjunct member of the squad. The warlock is roughly equal in status to the sarth of the unit—not under the sarth's command, nor able to command the sarth (or, indeed, any of the githwarriors). A warlock who hopes to survive and advance cooperates with the sarth of his unit (and vice versa), but it is a relationship of equals and not of command. Those warlocks who can demonstrate mastery of 4th-level spells and show talents for leadership (by means of the Leadership feat) gain the rank and title of kajorr, or "master." A kajorr is a commander of lower-level warlocks, using magic to communicate with warlocks in different units spread across the field of battle. A kajorr commands 4 to 6 lesser warlocks and cooperates closely with a githwarrior kith'rak. A kajorr who demonstrates mastery of 7th-level spells is named a tlai'kajorr, or "grand master," and coordinates the operations of several kajorrs.

As arcane spellcasters, warlocks usually forgo the ornate armor of their githwarrior counterparts. A very few warlocks don light armor and wade into melee casting touch spells on their opponents, but this role falls more frequently to the gish. Most warlocks dress in comfortable, loose clothing, favoring bright colors and elaborate embroidered decoration. The standard garb of a warlock is a long strip of white or black linen wound tightly around the torso, a pair of loose, patterned breeches drawn tight below the knee, and a loose, solid-colored outer jacket with elbow-length sleeves. Arcane symbols representing fire, acid, cold, negative energy, and other eldritch forces are common ornaments stitched onto the back or sleeves of a warlock's jacket, while symbols of protection are painted all along the linen strip worn beneath the outer clothing. (Sometimes these sigils have actual protective value; see the sidebar.) Warlocks are frequently equipped with wands and staffs, but generally carry no weapons other than an ornate dagger.

Wrappings of Armor

A popular substitute for *bracers of armor* among the githyanki, *wrappings of armor* is a magic linen wrapping that forms an undergarment for githyanki warlocks. The protective sigils painted on the wrappings provide an armor bonus to AC, just like the magic bracers do. A character wearing *wrappings of armor* cannot also benefit from a magic vest, vestment, or shirt.

Moderate conjuration; CL 7th; Craft Wondrous Item, mage armor, creator's class level must be twice that of the bonus placed in the wrappings; Price 1,000 gp (+1), 4,000 gp (+2), 9,000 gp (+3), 16,000 gp (+4), 25,000 gp (+5), 36,000 gp (+6), 49,000 gp (+7), or 64,000 gp (+8); Weight 1 lb.

Gish

The caste system of the githyanki recognizes that many githyanki do not fit easily into the githwarrior or warlock caste. The gish ("skilled") caste includes those soldiers of the Lich-Queen who are accomplished in combat both with weapons and with spells. These multitalented githyanki include multiclass characters with one githwarrior class and one warlock class, such as fighter/wizards and barbarian/sorcerers. In addition, single-class bards (and psychic warriors) are members of the gish caste, since their class abilities include both the skills of a warrior and the spells of a warlock. The gish caste was actually the last caste to develop, appearing a few centuries after the birth of the githyanki race.

Gish generally serve in the same units as githwarriors. Like githwarriors, they can hope to be promoted to command such units based on their skill in battle and spells. A gish who serves as a sarth of a unit carries the formal title gish'sarath, although members of the unit would still speak of "my sarth." A gish'sarath is generally at least 6th level—usually balanced between martial and arcane classes (such as a 3rd-level fighter/3rd-level wizard) or a 6th level bard. Similarly, a gish who serves as a captain carries the formal title of gish'kith'arak. A gish'kith'arak is usually at least 12th level.

Some gish forgo armor like their warlock counterparts, while others (particularly bards) wear light armor. Multiclass gish sometimes wear armor as well. In fact, some gish units consist of multiclass characters with only one level or so of an arcane spellcasting class, heavily armored and bearing wands and similar spell trigger devices into battle. As a mark of his caste, every gish wears at least some piece of armor, if only a pair of ornate greaves or vambraces too small to offer actual protection. An otherwise unarmored gish dresses like a warlock, while a gish in armor is distinguished from a githwarrior only by the linen wrappings he wears under his armor, which are not immediately visible to the casual observer.

Armored or not, gish carry a full complement of weapons, favoring the same bladed weapons as githwarriors. They generally rely on spells rather than crossbows for ranged attacks, and many enjoy using touch spells in melee rather than, or in addition to, weapons. They are often equipped with magic weapons, including *spell storing* weapons, and other magic items useful in melee combat.

Mlar

Mlars are a unique variety of magical artisan and crafter. Most mlars focus on the construction and repair of buildings, tools, weapons, and other necessities, while a few

Table 3–1: The Mlar

NPC Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Spells Per Day 0	1	2	3	4	5	6
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	3	0	—	—	—	—	—
3rd	+2	+1	+1	+3	3	1	—	—	—	—	—
4th	+3	+1	+1	+4	3	2	0	—	—	—	—
5th	+3	+1	+1	+4	3	3	1	—	—	—	—
6th	+4	+2	+2	+5	3	3	2	—	—	—	—
7th	+5	+2	+2	+5	3	3	2	0	—	—	—
8th	+6/+1	+2	+2	+6	3	3	3	1	—	—	—
9th	+6/+1	+3	+3	+6	3	3	3	2	—	—	—
10th	+7/+2	+3	+3	+7	3	3	3	2	0	—	—
11th	+8/+3	+3	+3	+7	3	3	3	3	1	—	—
12th	+9/+4	+4	+4	+8	3	3	3	3	2	—	—
13th	+9/+4	+4	+4	+8	3	3	3	3	2	0	—
14th	+10/+5	+4	+4	+9	4	3	3	3	3	1	—
15th	+11/+6/+1	+5	+5	+9	4	4	3	3	3	2	—
16th	+12/+7/+2	+5	+5	+10	4	4	4	3	3	2	0

use their powers to create sculpture and other objects of art. Mlars are not a part of the Lich-Queen's armies, and they are essentially NPC noncombatants. They are nevertheless an important and valued caste within githyanki society. There are no formal ranks within the mlar caste, though of course a 20th-level master crafter has more authority and commands more respect than a 1st-level apprentice.

Mlar is an NPC class, similar to the adept described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, but with an extremely limited spell list.

Hit Die: d6.

Class Skills

The mlar's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Knowledge (all skills taken individually) (Int), Profession (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), and Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at 1st Level: (4 + Int modifier) x 4.

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the mlar NPC class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Mlars are skilled with all simple weapons. Mlars are not proficient with any type of armor nor with shields.

Spells: A mlar casts arcane spells. She is limited to a certain number of spells of each spell level per day, according to her class level. Like a sorcerer, a mlar casts spells from a very limited lists of spells she knows, and need not prepare her spells ahead of time.

The DC for a saving throw against a mlar's spell is 10 + spell level + the mlar's Intelligence modifier.

When the mlar gets 0 spells of a given level (see Table 3–1: The Mlar), she gets only bonus spells for that spell slot. A mlar without a bonus spell for that level cannot yet cast a spell of that level. Bonus spells are based on Intelligence.

Starting Gear

2d4 × 10 gp worth of equipment. Mlars dress in loose, ankle-length pants, often brightly colored, and equally colorful (not always coordinating) loose-fitting shirts. They typically carry maces or daggers for self-defense.

Mlar Spell List

Mlars know the spells on the following list and no others:

0 level—*mending*, *prestidigitation* (used only to change the color or objects or to create decoration)

1st level—*magic weapon*

2nd level—*make whole*

3rd level—*stone shape*

4th level—*minor creation*

5th level—*fabricate*

6th level—*major creation*

Hr'a'cknir

The members of the hr'a'cknir caste are the experts of githyanki society. Dwelling on the Astral Plane, however, these experts are, by and large, not the mundane artisans and professionals of most Material-Plane societies. Rather, the hr'a'cknir are skilled at the manipulation, through minor magical and psionic means, of the energies of the Astral Plane itself.

Hr'a'cknirs include the ghustils, githyanki who can manipulate astral energy to heal. (Ghustil is a prestige class described in Chapter 2.) Other hr'a'cknir are the senja'si, seers who are said to be able to predict the future and view the present and past. They are sorcerers or specialist diviner wizards, not considered part of the warlock caste because their spell selection makes them useless in combat. Varsh are caretakers that rear the

young of a community, supervising both their time on the Astral Plane and their "growing years" on the Material Plane or some other plane on which time passes normally. Experts and commoners fill out the ranks of the hr'a'cknir caste, though neither of these NPC classes is as common as it is among humans and other Material-Plane humanoids. Aristocrats and adepts are unknown among the githyanki.

Hr'a'cknirs wear colorful, patterned tunics that cover them from shoulder to knee. Like mlars, they carry simple weapons for self-defense.

The Great Taboo: Religion and the Githyanki

The Lich-Queen Vlaakith is the sole recipient of her subjects' devotion, the closest thing the githyanki have to a deity. Her jealousy drives her to exterminate any githyanki who worships anything but her, be it deity or impersonal principle. This is all true, as far as it goes, but to say that religion simply does not exist among the githyanki is overly simplistic.

That said, there are a scant handful of githyanki who offer very secretive devotion to one or more deities, hoping to win some god's favor upon the githyanki race and ensure their victory on their crusade of conquest. Some even flee the reach of the Lich-Queen seeking the freedom to worship a deity of their choice. Among these githyanki, Hextor, Erythnul, Nerull, Vecna, and the dragon goddess Tiamat are the most common objects of devotion, or even Boccob or Wee Jas among more neutral-leaning outcasts. (In the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting*, githyanki are drawn to the worship of Bane, Cyric, Gargauth, Loviatar, Shar, Talona, Talos, and Velsharoon, as well as Tiamat, in addition to Azuth, Hoar, Kossuth, Savras, and Tempus among neutral renegades.)

Of course, githyanki who have a religious bent never discuss it, and the possibility of this phenomenon occurring among the people of the Lich-Queen is utterly unspeakable. When closeted believers are caught, they are killed without explanation or trial. When discussing the culture of nongithyanki, githyanki avoid the topic of religion if at all possible, refuse to name any deities, and treat the subject, if it cannot be avoided, hastily and awkwardly, trying hard to ensure that they sound not the least bit interested or sympathetic.

One form of religious sentiment that is almost acceptable among the githyanki, though they themselves would rarely describe it as religion at all, is a sort of messianic expectation. After meeting with Tiamat in the Nine Hells, the hero-liberator Gith disappeared—perhaps remaining in the Hells with Tiamat as some kind of payment for the pact she made with the goddess's red dragon consort, perhaps elsewhere on some timeless plane. Many githyanki believe that Gith will return to lead her people once more. As the Lich-Queen leads the githyanki in the conquest of Pharagos, this Gith cult grows in numbers as well as in expectation: many githyanki now believe that Gith is only waiting for the completion of this great crusade before she returns to rule her people in a kingdom that will have no end.

Finally, many githyanki—particularly warlocks—would consider themselves spiritual, even without any devotion to a deity. For these gith warlocks, serving as a physical conduit for magical energy, particularly negative energy, is an ineffable experience of transcendence. They lose themselves in a power greater than themselves, channeling the cosmic forces of the universe in the service of a will higher than their own. Most githyanki knights (blackguards) describe their use of unholy power in similar terms.

A Life of War

The culture and society of the githyanki are defined above all else by the constant readiness for war. Living on the Astral Plane means that they need to spend little effort on what most races consider the basic necessities of life, giving them as a race the freedom to train most of their population in the craft of war. As a result, the majority of githyanki are githwarriors, warlocks, or gish. While the mlars and hr'a'ckirs serve vitally important functions, without which the military machinery would grind to a halt, the war-trained castes command far greater respect and hold the reins of power. A githyanki's skill in combat, whether that be measured by martial prowess or arcane achievement, ultimately determines his status in githyanki society.

The members of the war-trained castes live a life of constant preparation—training, tending to arms and armor, learning new maneuvers, new spells, new techniques for cleanly and elegantly disemboweling or decapitating a foe. Githyanki society has no familial units and recognizes no bonds of affection, so the closest relationship a githyanki is likely to have is with her mentor and those she trains herself. The training relationship is the philosophical and practical ideal of the interaction between githyanki—in a perfect world, a githyanki would learn from every word she hears and likewise instruct with every word she utters, to the ultimate betterment of the race.

All githyanki, from the hr'a'cknirs and mlars to the githwarriors and warlocks, strive to better themselves in order to bring the githyanki race as a whole closer to perfection. Self-betterment means rising as high as possible in one's chosen profession: if a githyanki is a ghustil by training and preference, then she strives to be the best ghustil she can possibly be. The knights who serve the Lich-Queen directly are treated with such reverence in part because they embody this ideal, honing themselves to a keen edge like the *silver swords* they wield until they literally transcend themselves, channeling a power that is beyond their mortal frames. This constant striving for self-improvement is born of the githyanki's deep-seated paranoia.

With the Lich-Queen's declaration of war upon the world of Pharagos, a life of military preparedness has now become a life of active warfare. All githyanki are expected to contribute to the war to the best of their ability, in whatever ways are suited to their castes and professions. Naturally, this has the greatest impact upon the githwarriors, warlocks, and gish, who have been mobilized for active duty and now pour through color pools into the Material Plane to wage the Lich-Queen's war.

Weapons, Armor, and the Tools of War

Githyanki have a grim fascination with weapons and armor born from their constant training and preparation for war. They forge weapons and armor with elaborate decoration—ornate pommels, engraved blades, intricate tracings along plates of armor, and so on—and keep them impeccably clean, polished, and sharpened. A githyanki whose weapons or armor are in ill repair is viewed with scorn by other githyanki, and may even be accused of treason for not remaining prepared to fight in the Lich-Queen's service.

Weapons

As a race, githyanki favor long blades, often curved, and teach fighting styles that involve flamboyant flourishes of the blade. They are fond of greatswords, bastard swords, longswords, scimitars, halberds, glaives, scythes, and similar weapons of their own devising. Table 3–2: Githyanki Weapons shows game statistics for a number of exotic blades of githyanki invention.

Bladed Armor: You can add blades to your armor, which can inflict damage in a grapple or as a separate attack. See **Armor**, below.

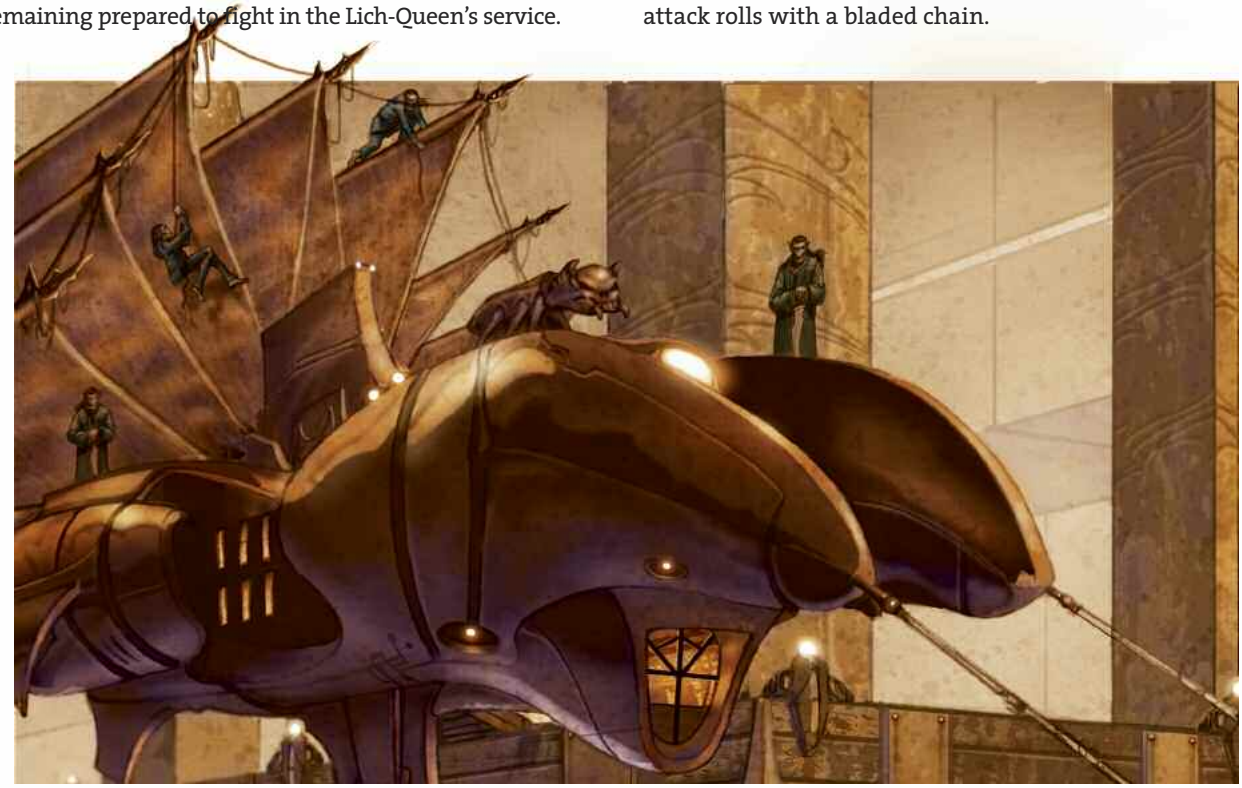
Chain, Bladed: A bladed chain is a long chain made of razor-sharp blades, with only two blunt areas where the chain can be safely held. It can be used either as a double weapon or as a reach weapon. You can fight with it as if fighting with two weapons, incurring all the normal attack penalties as if using a one-handed weapon and a light weapon. In this case, you can only strike at an adjacent opponent.

If you use the bladed chain as a reach weapon, you can strike opponents 10 feet away with it. In addition, unlike other weapons with reach, you can use it against an adjacent foe. In this case, you can only use one end of the bladed chain effectively; you cannot use it as a double weapon.

You can make trip attacks with a bladed chain. If you are tripped during your own trip attempt, you can drop the bladed chain to avoid being tripped.

When using a bladed chain, you get a +2 bonus on your opposed attack roll when attempting to disarm an opponent (including the roll to avoid being disarmed if you fail to disarm your opponent).

You can use the Weapon Finesse feat to apply your Dexterity modifier instead of your Strength modifier to attack rolls with a bladed chain.



Marc Sasso

Crescent Blade: A short haft with a crescent-shaped blade on the end, the crescent blade is a special monk weapon, which gives a monk wielding a crescent blade special options.

Crescent Blade, Double: A double crescent blade is a double weapon, a straight wooden haft with a crescent-shaped blade at each end. The double crescent blade is a special monk weapon, which gives a monk wielding a double crescent blade special options.

Crossbow, Triple: A triple crossbow is a light crossbow that has been modified to hold three bolts in firing position at once, with three strings that can be released either all at once or one at a time. In the simplest method of use, which any character proficient with a light crossbow can do with no penalty, the crossbow can simply be fired normally three times before reloading, which requires a full-round action. The crossbow cannot be reloaded until all three bolts have been fired.

A character who has Exotic Weapon Proficiency with this weapon can fire three bolts at once as a standard action. The character makes a single attack roll with a –6 penalty, and the target must be within 30 feet. If the attack roll indicates a hit, the character rolls damage for all three bolts. Damage reduction or other resistances apply separately against each bolt fired. Regardless of the number of bolts fired, precision-based damage (such as sneak attack damage) applies only once. On a critical hit, only one bolt inflicts critical damage; all others inflict normal damage.

Scythe, Githyanki Double: A githyanki double scythe is a double weapon, a complex haft with a scythe blade at each end.

Scythe-Sword, Githyanki: A githyanki scythe-sword is a double weapon with a scythe blade at one end and a long, slightly curved sword blade at the other.

Scimitar, Githyanki Double: A githyanki double scimitar is a double weapon, similar to a two-bladed sword but with shorter, curving blades.

Silver Swords

The *Monster Manual* describes the most common form of *silver sword*, which is a *+3 greatsword* that requires an Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat to master, with the ability to sever an astral traveler's silver cord. This ability is actually a weapon property, and weapons with this property can be made with any enhancement bonus and other properties.

Silver Sword: A weapon with this property looks much like a standard githyanki weapon. When drawn in melee, however, the blade transforms into a column of silvery liquid, altering the weapon's balance round by round as the blade's shape flows and shimmers. A user who has the Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*silver sword*) feat and who is on the Astral Plane can attack the silver cord that connects the astral form of an astrally projecting traveler to its material counterpart. The normally insubstantial cord is treated as a tangible object with the owner's AC, hardness 10, and 20 hit points. A silver cord visibly trails 5 feet behind an astral traveler before fading into the astral medium. Attacking it draws an attack of opportunity from the astral traveler unless the wielder of the *silver sword* has the Silver Cord Strike feat.

When the cord is damaged, the astral traveler must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 13) or be immediately forced to return to its body—which might be a good idea anyway if the traveler is not up to fighting githyanki on

Table 3–2: Githyanki Weapons

Martial Weapons	Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
Light melee							
Bladed armor	special	1d4	1d6	19–20/×2	—	n/a	Slashing
Exotic Weapons	**Cost**	**Dmg (S)**	**Dmg (M)**	**Critical**	**Range Increment**	**Weight**	**Type**
One-handed melee							
Crescent blade	15 gp	1d6	1d8	×2	—	4 lb.	Slashing
Two-handed melee							
Chain, bladed	40 gp	1d4/1d4	1d6/1d6	19–20/×2	—	5 lb.	Slashing
Crescent blade, double‡	90 gp	1d6/1d6	1d8/1d8	×2	—	7 lb.	Slashing
Scythe, githyanki double‡	100 gp	1d6/1d6	2d4/2d4	×4	—	20 lb.	Slashing and piercing
Scythe-sword, githyanki‡	120 gp	1d6/1d6	2d4/1d8	×4 and 19–20/×2	—	15 lb.	Slashing and piercing/Slashing
Scimitar, githyanki double‡	95 gp	1d4/1d4	1d6/1d6	18–20/×2	—	10 lb.	Slashing
Ranged							
Crossbow, triple	150 gp	1d6	1d8	19–20/×2	80 ft.	6 lb.	Piercing
Bolts (9)	1 gp	—	—		—	1 lb.	—

‡ Double weapon: You can fight with a double weapon as if fighting with two weapons, but if you do, you incur all the normal attack penalties as if using a one-handed weapon and a light weapon. A creature using a double weapon in one hand, such as a Large creature using a Medium-size double crescent blade, can't use it as a double weapon.

their home plane. Severing the silver cord completely destroys utterly both the astral form and the body on the Material Plane.

Moderate necromancy; CL 11th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, creator must be a githyanki; Price +4 bonus.

The *+5 vorpal silver swords* described as minor artifacts in the *Monster Manual* are actually epic weapons with a market price of 3,920,350 gp. These swords are all ancient in make, predating the reign of the Lich-Queen. Forged in a time when githyanki were allowed to reach epic levels, these swords are only handed down to the greatest heroes of the race. Slightly more common are the *+3 unholy silver swords* wielded by the most powerful githyanki knights; these weapons have a market price of 162,350 gp.

Armor

From a distance, a troop of githwarriors might appear human—were it not for the baroque ornamentation of their armor. Most forms of githyanki armor are simply variations on the common armor types detailed in the *Player's Handbook*—githyanki full plate is much more elaborate than most forms of full plate, but its armor bonus, armor check penalty, maximum Dexterity bonus, and weight are the same as any masterwork suit of full plate. Almost all githyanki armor is masterwork—anything worth doing is worth doing well, at least where armor and weapons are concerned—and features armor spikes or armor blades (described below).

Armor Blades: You can have blades added to your armor. They allow you to deal extra slashing damage (see Table 3–2: Githyanki Weapons) with a successful grapple attack. The blades count as a martial weapon. If you are not proficient with them, you suffer a –4 penalty on grapple checks when you try to use them. You also can make a regular melee attack (or off-hand attack) with the blades, and they count as a light weapon in this case. (You can't also make an attack with armor blades if you've already made an attack with another off-hand weapon, and vice versa.)

An enhancement bonus to a suit of armor's armor bonus does not improve the blades' effectiveness, but the blades can be made into magic weapons in their own right.

Beaded Armor: The githyanki equivalent of scale mail, beaded armor consists of large metal plates—each one individually engraved, often adorned with gemstones and precious metal—strung like beads on a vertical leather cord reaching from the shoulders to a similarly plated strap around the waist. The shoulders are protected with an elaborate series of articulated metal plates that add the appearance of muscularity to the wearer's gaunt frame. (The githyanki favor the same style in their plate armors and breastplates.) A skirt of metal beads on leather straps hangs down from the waist, and engraved metal greaves and vambraces add protection to the extremities. A leather coat underneath protects the torso from weapons that might find their way between the metal plates.

Mounts and Vessels of War

Most githyanki, and especially knights, like to go into battle mounted while on the Material Plane. They are so accustomed to the high speed of movement and combat on the Astral Plane that fighting on foot feels unbearably slow. Naturally, knights often ride the red dragons (or fiendish red dragons) who obey the githyanki because of Gith's ancient pact with Ephelomon, consort of Tiamat. Other favorite mounts include nightmares, hieracosphinxes, and spider eaters.

Githyanki knights typically prefer riding juvenile or young adult red dragons. Younger dragons are too immature, while older ones are simply too large. The most powerful knights sometimes ride adult or even mature adult dragons, but red dragons any older than mature adult are more powerful than any githyanki rider, and they know it. Even Ephelomon's pact with Gith can't prevent an old red dragon from unbearable condescension toward a githyanki rider whose power, impressive though it may be, pales in comparison to the dragon's great might.

A nightmare can carry 300 pounds as a light load, 600 pounds as a medium load, and 900 pounds as a heavy load. A foal costs 5,000 gp. Nightmares cannot be trained, and will serve only cruel and evil masters who both dominate them and reward them with plenty of opportunity to spread pain and destruction. The Nightmare Mount feat allows a githyanki blackguard to acquire a loyal nightmare mount.

A hieracosphinx can carry 459 pounds as a light load, 918 pounds as a medium load, and 1,380 pounds as a heavy load. An egg costs 5,500 gp. Like nightmares, hieracosphinxes are too intelligent to train with the Handle Animal skill, but they are much more pliable through bribes and threats than nightmares are.

A spider eater can carry 612 pounds as a light load, 1,224 pounds as a medium load, and 1,840 pounds as a heavy load. An egg costs 2,000 gp, while a young spider eater costs 3,000 gp. Training a spider eater requires six weeks of work

Table 3–3: Armor and Shields

Armor	Cost	Armor/Shield Bonus	Maximum Dex Bonus	Armor Check Penalty	Arcane Spell Failure	——Speed—— (30 ft.)	(20 ft.)	Weight‡
Medium armor								
Beaded	80 gp	+4	+4	–4	20%	20 ft.	15 ft.	27 lb.
Extras								
Armor blades	+65 gp	—	—	—	—	—	—	+10 lb.

and a successful Handle Animal check (DC 25). Riding a spider eater requires an exotic saddle. A spider eater can fight while carrying a rider, but the rider cannot also attack unless he or she succeeds at a Ride check (see the Ride skill in Chapter 4 in the *Player's Handbook*). Professional trainers charge 3,000 gp to rear or train a spider eater.

Astral Ships: On the Astral Plane, the githyanki commonly fight from massive astral ships—vessels that vary from the size of a small keelboat carrying a single squad of soldiers to that of a massive galleon with a crew of hundreds. Powered by magical sails that catch the motion of astral energies, these ships are normally useless on the Material Plane where no such arcane winds blow.

For centuries, githyanki mlar and hr'a'cknir have worked together to create magic items to enable these astral ships to fly through the skies of a Material Plane world. Armed with *spines of earthly wind*, astral vessels now sail through portals to the Material Plane and darken the sky of Pharagos carrying the Lich-Queen's armies.

Astral Skiff: Huge vehicle; Profession (sailor) +0; Spd fly 120 ft. (average); Overall AC 3; Section hp 40 (hardness 10); Section AC 3; Ram 4d8; Face 15 ft. by 5 ft.; Height 10 ft.; SA ramming prow; Crew 1 (carries 3); Cargo 1 ton (Spd 100 ft. if 1/2 ton or more).

Astral Brig: Gargantuan vehicle; Profession (sailor) +0; Spd fly 90 ft. (average); Overall AC 1; Section hp 40 (hardness 10); Section AC 3; Ram 8d8; Size 60 ft. by 20 ft.; Height 10 ft.; SA great ballista, ramming prow; Crew 1 (carries 50); cargo 40 tons (Spd 60 ft. if 20 tons or more).

Planar Raider: Colossal vehicle; Profession (sailor) +0; Spd fly 50 ft. (poor); Overall AC –3; Section hp 40 (hardness 10); Section AC 3; Ram 10d10; Size 100 ft. by 30 ft.; Height 15 ft.; SA 10 great ballistae, ramming prow; Crew 1 (carries 100); cargo 150 tons (Spd 30 ft. if 75 tons or more).

Githyanki Technology

The githyanki boast a number of magical and nonmagical innovations to aid in planar conquest.

Great Ballista: A great ballista is essentially a Colossal heavy crossbow fixed in place. Its size makes it hard for most creatures to aim it, as described under Weapon Size on page 113 of the *Player's Handbook*. Thus, a Medium creature takes a –8 penalty on attack rolls when using a ballista, and a Small creature takes a –10 penalty. Each member of a great ballista's crew (to a maximum of 3) can attempt to aid the operator's ranged attack with a special use of the aid another action, providing a +2 to hit for each crew member that succeeds at a ranged attack roll against AC 10. Fortunately, great ballistae are usually fired at buildings, ships, and other exceedingly large targets. It takes four full-round actions to reload and ready the great ballista after firing due to the complicated system of cranks and winches that enable creatures to cock the powerful weapon. Each full-round task can be done by a different member of the great ballista's crew, allowing it to be reloaded and ready to fire after 1 full round. A great ballista takes up a space 10 feet across.

Cost: 1,000 gp; *Damage:* 6d8; *Critical:* (19-20) ×2; *Range Increment:* 120 ft.; *Typical crew:* 4.

Spine of Earthly Wind: A Huge air elemental is bound within a column of mithral shaped like a spine that runs from a control skull to fuse with the keel of a githyanki astral ship. Astral ships with a *spine of earthly wind* can sail the skies of a Material Plane world. The vessel's fly speed on such a world is equal to its astral speed minus 10 feet, and its maneuverability is reduced by one class (from good to average, average to poor, or poor to clumsy). A *spine of earthly wind* has no effect on any vehicle other than an astral ship.

The control skull of an astral ship is shaped like an illithid skull and serves as the focus point for the pilot of the ship. A githyanki touching a control skull perceives the world around it as though the ship and its contents are transparent. The githyanki can then mentally control the ship's movement as a full-round action, making Profession (sailor) skill checks as necessary. A non-githyanki suffers 4 negative levels while touching the control skull, which disappear after the skull is released, but can attempt to pilot the ship normally. The skull follows the mental commands of the last person to touch it, so control of the ship is maintained by keeping threats from entering the pilot room the control skull is typically housed in. A ship without a pilot continues on the course of its last command.

A *spine of earthly wind* or a control skull can be damaged by attacks or spells like any magic item. Note that both are composed of mithral; each has a hardness of 15 and 250 hit points for the purposes of causing enough damage to destroy it. Destroying the *spine* releases the angry elemental to the Prime Material and causes the ship's flight magic to fail, sending it plummeting to the ground. When a control skull is destroyed, the astral ship travels at its highest speed in whatever direction the ship is pointing until it collides with an object large enough to stop it or until the ship is sufficiently damaged to destroy it. No method can regain control of the ship, but a *dismissal* spell cast on the *spine* after the skull is destroyed releases the elemental trapped inside to the Elemental Plane of Air and causes the ship to fall.

Strong conjuration; CL 17th; Craft Wondrous Item, binding, greater planar binding; Price 140,000 gp.

Dimensional Key: This item is usually a pin, brooch, or amulet shaped like a mundane key. Once per day, the wearer can use a *freedom of passage* effect to bypass a dimensional barrier.

Strong abjuration; CL 15th; Craft Wondrous Item, *freedom of passage*; Price 43,200 gp; *Weight:* —.

Chapter 4: Monstrous Allies

The Lich-Queen's preparations for the invasion of Pharagos go back at least a century. Two of the greatest fruits of her efforts are the result of breeding programs: the half-dragon duthka'gith and the fearsome b'kallash dreadnought. In addition to these races engineered for war, this chapter details the spectral hound, a creature supposedly bred by the githyanki centuries ago, and still used by the giths as a work animal.

Attila Adorjany

Duthka'gith

Medium-Size Dragon (Extraplanar), Fighter 1
Hit Dice: 1d10+2 (7 hp)
Initiative: +1
Speed: 20 ft. (breastplate), base 30 ft.
AC: 20 (+1 Dex, +4 natural, +5 breastplate), touch 11, flat-footed 19
Base Attack/Grapple: +1/+5
Attack: Masterwork greatsword +6 melee; or claw +5 melee
Full Attack: Masterwork greatsword +6 melee and bite +0 melee; or 2 claws +5 melee and bite +0 melee
Damage: Masterwork greatsword 2d6+6, bite 1d6+2, claw 1d4+4
Face/Reach: 5 ft. across/5 ft.
Special Attacks: Breath weapon, psionics, smite good
Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., cold resistance 5, fire immunity, psionics, SR 6 (see text)
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +1, Will –1
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 12
Skills: Climb +7, Intimidate +4, Jump +7
Feats: Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword)

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 3
Level Adjustment: +5
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Usually chaotic evil
Advancement: By character class

Bred to be superwarriors in the armies of the Lich-Queen, the duthka'giths are, at best, a partial success. They inherited great strength and intelligence from their draconic blood, but equal amounts of arrogance, independence, and love of havoc.

Duthka'giths have lost most of the githyanki similarity to humans. They average close to 7 feet tall and are considerably heavier than githyanki, averaging more than 210 pounds. Their skin has a definite scaled texture to it and ranges from deep red (primarily on the shoulders and back) to orange (on the palms, soles of the feet, and belly). Their hair is shaggy and wild, resisting any attempt to pull it into the formal topknots the githyanki favor. Their ears are slightly larger in proportion to their heads than a githyanki's are, but share the same serrated back edge. Their eyes gleam red, suggesting glowing black embers.

Duthka'giths speak the githyanki language and Draconic. Many also speak Common, but they share the common githyanki disdain for the languages and culture of other species.

Combat

Duthka'giths were bred to be leaders, but generally lack the discipline and focus possessed by the greatest githyanki commanders. They love wading into melee, swinging massive blades in great swathes of destruction, saving their fiery breath weapons for when they really matter, when they can decimate an entire squad of opponents.

Breath Weapon (Su): Once per day, a duthka'gith can breathe a cone of fire to sear its enemies. The 30-foot cone deals 6d8 points of fire damage to creatures within it. A successful Reflex save (DC 12) reduces the damage by half.

The DC is Constitution based and does not count the duthka'gith's class Hit Dice.

Dragon Traits: Duthka'giths are immune to *sleep* and paralysis effects. They have darkvision (60-foot range) and low-light vision.

Psionics (Sp): 3/day—*daze humanoid* (DC 11) and *mage hand*. In addition, duthka'giths of 3rd level or higher can use *blur* three times per day, duthka'giths of 6th level or higher can use *dimension door* three times per day, and duthka'giths of 9th level or higher can use *telekinesis* (DC 16) three times per day and *plane shift* once per day. These abilities are as the spells cast by a sorcerer of the duthka'gith's level. The DCs of these abilities are Charisma based.

Smite Good (Su): Once per day a duthka'gith can make a normal attack to deal additional damage equal to its character level against a good foe.

Spell Resistance (Su): A duthka'gith has spell resistance of 5 + 1 per character level.

Duthka'gith Characters

A duthka'gith's favored class is fighter. See Chapter 2 for more information about playing duthka'giths as characters.

Derek Thompson

B'kallash Dreadnought

Colossal Outsider (Extraplanar)
Hit Dice: 30d8+450 (585 hp)
Initiative: +3
Speed: 70 ft., fly 180 ft. (clumsy)
AC: 32 (–8 size, –1 Dex, +29 natural, +2 insight), touch 3, flat-footed 32
Base Attack/Grapple: +30/+66
Attack: Claw +42 melee
Full Attack: 2 claws +42 melee, bite +40 melee, 2 wings +40 melee, tail slap +40 melee
Damage: Claw 2d8+20, bite 4d6+10, wing 2d6+10, tail slap 2d8+30
Face/Reach: 30 ft. across/25 ft.
Special Attacks: Breath weapon, improved grab, swallow whole, rend 4d8+30
Special Qualities: Antimagic cone, DR 10/epic, fast healing 10, fire immunity, frightful presence, SR 28
Saves: Fort +32, Ref +16, Will +18
Abilities: Str 51, Dex 8, Con 41, Int 5, Wis 14, Cha 18
Skills: Hide +16, Listen +35, Move Silently +32, Spot +35, Survival +35
Feats: Awesome Blow, Blind-Fight, Cleave, Great Cleave, Hover, Improved Critical (bite, claw), Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack
Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground (Astral Plane)
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 19
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always chaotic evil
Advancement: 31–90 HD (Colossal)

Another product of the Lich-Queen's breeding programs, the b'kallash dreadnought is a hideous and terrifying beast. Spawned from a creature that has never before been tamed or controlled, the astral dreadnought (detailed in *Manual of the Planes*), the b'kallash also has traits and abilities derived from the red dragons allied with the githyanki. The b'kallash dreadnought is bred to be a near-mindless weapon of war, a brutal monstrosity send ahead of githyanki forces to soften the forces that might resist their march.

A b'kallash dreadnought is as large as a titan, massively muscled, and covered from head to tail in thick, spiked plates with a rusty brown color. Its two arms end in sharp, pincer-like claws, and two great draconic wings sprout from its shoulders. Its legs are like those of a dragon, and the creature can walk on these legs or run on

all fours as it chooses. A long, whiplike tail echoes the apparently infinite tail of the astral dreadnought, but the b'kallash dreadnought lashes its tail about in combat like a dragon does. Its single eye seems to smolder with an internal fire.

B'kallash dreadnoughts are capable of grunting a few words in Draconic.

Combat

A b'kallash dreadnought is nowhere near as smart as a dragon, and occasionally forgets to use its breath weapon. Keeping its eye on the most dangerous foes is a basic instinct, however, so it is well able to keep its antimagic cone trained on threatening spellcasters while rending fighters with its claws and tail.

While airborne, a b'kallash dreadnought cannot attack with its wings, but it can use all four of its claws. It cannot rend with its rear claws.

Antimagic Cone (Su): A b'kallash dreadnought's single eye continually produces a 150-foot antimagic cone extending straight ahead from the creature's front. This functions just like antimagic field cast by an 18th-level sorcerer, with the exception noted below. Once each round, during its turn, the b'kallash dreadnought decides which way its eye faces. The b'kallash dreadnought can make only bite attacks against creatures to its front.

All magical, spell-like, and supernatural effects within the cone are suppressed, with one exception. If the b'kallash dreadnought is on the Astral Plane, the antimagic cone does not suppress spells or effects that brought other creatures to the Astral Plane (the astral projection spell, for example). Those effects are locked in place while the subjects are in the cone and cannot be dismissed, trapping the subjects on the Astral Plane while under its effect.

Breath Weapon (Su): Cone of fire, 70 feet long, once per 1d4 rounds; damage 20d10, Reflex half DC 40. The DC is Constitution based. A b'kallash dreadnought must close its eye to use its breath weapon. Characters within the cone of the breath therefore receive the benefit of any magical bonuses on their saving throws or magical resistance to fire. It is possible for characters to ready an action until the dreadnought's eye is closed, attacking during this instant as though the dreadnought were blind (though its Blind-Fight feat reduces the benefit of this tactic).

Frightful Presence (Ex): The mere sight of a b'kallash dreadnought can unsettle or even panic opponents. The ability takes effect automatically whenever the b'kallash dreadnought attacks or moves within 200 feet of a foe. Those within range must succeed at a Will save (DC 29) or be affected. The DC is Charisma based. Creatures with 4 HD or fewer become panicked for 4d6 rounds, and those with 5 HD or more become shaken for 4d6 rounds. Those who succeed at the Will save are immune to the b'kallash dreadnought's frightful presence for one day.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the b'kallash dreadnought must hit with its bite attack. If it gets a hold, it automatically deals bite damage and can attempt to swallow the foe the following round. A creature held in the dreadnought's mouth receives no saving throw against its breath weapon.

Swallow Whole (Ex): A b'kallash dreadnought can try to swallow a grabbed opponent of Huge or smaller size by making a successful grapple check. Once inside, the opponent takes 4d6+20 points of crushing damage plus 2d8 points of acid damage and 2d8 points of fire damage per round from the dreadnought's gizzard. A swallowed creature can cut its way out by using a light slashing or piercing weapon to deal 35 points of damage to the gizzard (AC 24). Once the creature exits, muscular action closes the hole; another swallowed opponent must cut its own way out.

The b'kallash dreadnought's gullet can hold two Gargantuan, four Huge, eight Large, sixteen Medium-size, or thirty-two Small or smaller opponents.

Rend (Ex): A b'kallash dreadnought that hits with both claw attacks latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This automatically deals an additional 4d8+30 points of damage.

Spectral Hound

Medium-size Magical Beast (Extraplanar, Incorporeal)
Hit Dice: 5d10+5 (32 hp)
Initiative: +2
Speed: 40 ft.
AC: 13 (+2 Dex, +1 deflection), touch 13, flat-footed 11
Base Attack/Grapple: +5/+7
Attack: Bite +7 melee
Full Attack: Bite +7 melee
Damage: Bite 1d8+3
Face/Reach: 5 ft. across/5 ft.
Special Attacks: Astral sickness, ghost touch bite
Special Qualities: Astral tracking, incorporeal, plane shift, scent
Saves: Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +3
Abilities: Str 15, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 15, Cha 8
Skills: Listen +6, Spot +4, Survival +4*
Feats: Alertness, Track

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground (Astral Plane)
Organization: Solitary or pack (2–8)
Challenge Rating: 3
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral evil
Advancement: 6–8 HD (Medium-size); 9–15 HD (Large)

Spectral hounds are supernatural canines bred for a single purpose: to track quarry across the planes.

A spectral hound appears as a ghostly, insubstantial dog of indeterminate breed, resembling something like a large, broad jackal. Its translucent fur is smoky white and its eyes are inky black voids. Its jaws are large and strong

like a hyena's, and its teeth protrude from its mouth. They track and hunt in eerie silence.

The githyanki claim to have bred spectral hounds, perhaps from another variety of planar dog or perhaps from more mundane stock. If that is true, they did not guard the secret of their origin as fiercely as they protect most racial secrets, for spectral hounds are now widely used by deities, demons, and celestials who live or travel on the Astral Plane. They are widely domesticated, particularly among the githyanki, but occasionally roam wild on the Astral Plane.

Spectral hounds do not speak. They generally understand commands in a variety of languages, including Githyanki, Infernal, Abyssal, and Celestial.

Combat

Domesticated spectral hounds attack if they are commanded to, though they hesitate to fight to the death. Wild spectral hounds attack only if they clearly outnumber their prey, and flee quickly from superior foes.

Astral Sickness (Su): Supernatural disease—slam, Fortitude save (DC 13), incubation period 1 hour; damage 1d6 temporary Strength. The DC is Constitution based. Unlike normal diseases, astral sickness continues until the victim reaches Strength 0 or is cured.

An afflicted creature whose Strength reaches 0 from astral sickness becomes permanently incorporeal. His equipment remains fully corporeal and falls off his incorporeal form unless it has the *ghost touch* property. Once this occurs, *remove disease* no longer has any effect on the character, as the disease has run its course. A *remove curse* or *break enchantment* spell can restore the character to full corporeality, but the victim's incorporeality means that any such spell fails 50% of the time. Once restored to corporeal form, the character is incapable of movement until his lost Strength returns to him. A character who has been incorporeal for 12 hours shifts to the Astral Plane in his incorporeal form. Once this occurs, any would-be rescuers must find the victim in the endless void of the Astral Plane in order to restore him to corporeality and return him to his home plane. Of course, the victim is free to try to find his own way back to his home plane through an astral color pool or a *plane shift* spell, but he remains incorporeal.

Astral Tracking (Su): A spectral hound can attempt to track normally even through the featureless wastes of the Astral Plane (base DC 25). A spectral hound can use this ability to track quarry that uses a teleportation spell to travel, by entering the Astral Plane at the departure point, following the trail of the teleportation through the Astral Plane, and returning to the plane of departure at its quarry's destination.

Ghost Touch Bite (Su): The bite of a spectral hound affects both corporeal and incorporeal creatures normally, as though it were a weapon with the *ghost touch* property. It cannot affect ethereal creatures.

Incorporeal (Su): Immune to all nonmagical attack forms. 50% chance to ignore damage from any corporeal source. Pass through solid objects (but not force effects) at will.

Plane Shift (Sp): A spectral hound can travel from the Astral Plane to any plane that borders the Astral Plane and back again. This ability is similar to a *plane shift* spell, except that the spectral hound can transport itself only and it can choose its destination with pinpoint accuracy.

Scent (Ex): Detect opponents within 30 feet. Exact location is not revealed, unless within 5 feet. Track by scent.

Skills: *Spectral hounds receive a +10 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent (including tracking on the Astral Plane).

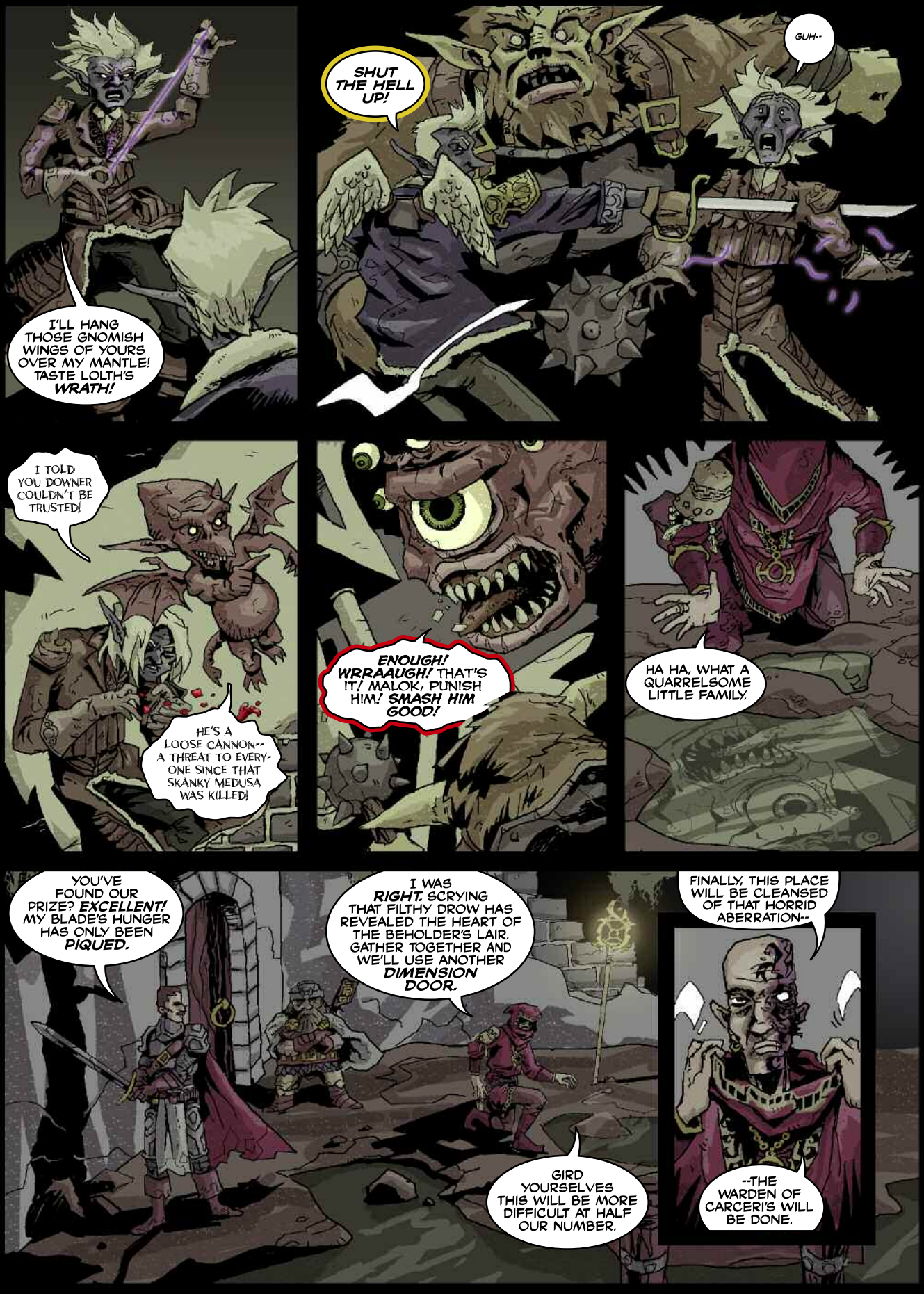
Training a Spectral Hound

Training a spectral hound requires six weeks of work and a successful Handle Animal check (DC 25). Spectral hound whelps are worth 5,000 gp apiece on the open market. Professional trainers charge 1,500 gp to rear or train a spectral hound.

Derek Thompson

Cartography by Christopher West

KYLE HUNTER'S
DOWNER
Downer is led deeper into the Underdark by a cadre of the beholder's twisted henchmen. These miscreants have questioned Downer's loyalty after he allowed two invading adventurers to escape unharmed. Our hero's patience wears thin as he begins his third hour of unpaid overtime and is called in front of his horrible, horrible boss.
PART III
EYE BOOGERS
ALL HAIL BELOVED LORD MANGLECRAMPS!
MILORD, YOU SEE ALL WITH MONOCULAR CLARITY. AS YOU DIRECTED, I HAVE BROUGHT THE COMMANDER OF THE SOUTH WING'S GUARD, DOWNER.
BLEERAAARGH! WAAARAAH! PUNY DROW! ALL YOUR GUARDS ARE DEAD! MANY BY YOUR OWN PETULANT HAND.
I AM DISPLEASED! EXPLAIN YOURSELF. I RISKED MUCH BY HELPING YOU, AND ONLY BECAUSE OF YOUR GLORIOUS PAST. NOW I SEE I SHOULD HAVE PUT YOU OUT OF YOUR MISERY. WUUAARGH!
=YAWN= YEAH, THANKS AND ALL, CRAMPS, BUT I'M JUST NOT INTO IT ANYMORE. PAY ME AND I'M OUT OF HERE.
WHAT! QUIT?! YOU'RE KIDDING. THERE ARE CRAZY TREASURE HUNTERS DOWN HERE RIGHT NOW! GET BACK TO WORK!
DOWNER, YOUR BEHAVIOR IS DISGRACEFUL. I'VE TOLERATED YOUR INSOLENCE FAR TOO LONG.
YOU DARE SPEAK THAT WAY TO OUR MASTER?


I'LL HANG THOSE GNOMISH WINGS OF YOURS OVER MY MANTLE! TASTE LOLTH'S WRATH!
SHUT THE HELL UP!
GUH--
I TOLD YOU DOWNER COULDN'T BE TRUSTED!
HE'S A LOOSE CANNON-- A THREAT TO EVERY-ONE SINCE THAT SKANKY MEDUSA WAS KILLED!
ENOUGH! WRRAAUGH! THAT'S IT! MALOK, PUNISH HIM! SMASH HIM GOOD!
HA HA, WHAT A QUARRELSOME LITTLE FAMILY.
YOU'VE FOUND OUR PRIZE? EXCELLENT! MY BLADE'S HUNGER HAS ONLY BEEN PIQUED.
I WAS RIGHT. SCRYING THAT FILTHY DROW HAS REVEALED THE HEART OF THE BEHOLDER'S LAIR. GATHER TOGETHER AND WE'LL USE ANOTHER DIMENSION DOOR.
GIRD YOURSELVES THIS WILL BE MORE DIFFICULT AT HALF OUR NUMBER.
FINALLY, THIS PLACE WILL BE CLEANSED OF THAT HORRID ABERRATION--
--THE WARDEN OF CARCERI'S WILL BE DONE.

Story and art by [illegible]. Lettering by [illegible] production. [illegible]

[illegible] #2 *bijou*: small; *palaver*: discussion; *joggering omee*: entertainer; *niffed*: killed; *madzerette*: halfling; *gajo*: stranger.

Dungeon WEB ENHANCEMENT
ISSUE 100

THE LICH-QUEENS BELOVED

BY CHRISTOPHER PERKINS & PETER ADKISON
ARTWORK BY DEREK THOMPSON

The Flying Fortresses surrounding the githyanki capital of Tu'narath can serve as part of an expanded adventure set in and around the city. The following description accompanies the map of the fortresses from the poster map accompanying issue #100.

FLYING FORTRESS (EL 18)

Beyond the city's gravity, floating at various heights around the upper torso and head of the dead god, are numerous defense platforms, where githyanki squads maintain vigilant watch over the city and the astral haze surrounding it. Each defense platform features a small fortress built into a floating chunk of rock; tethered by chains to this fortress are four smaller guard towers built on smaller chunks of astral debris. These structures do not have gravity; creatures move around by thought, at a speed of 10 feet per point of Intelligence.

The "flying fortresses" are spaced 250 to 500 feet from the city and slowly rotate clockwise on lateral axes, the tethered guard towers orbiting the central fortresses like satellites. A fortress completes one rotation every hour. The fortresses and towers are made of stone set with hundreds of serrated iron spears. The towers have wooden balconies equipped with ballistae (loading time 3 rounds; 3d6 points of damage per bolt). The enormous chains joining the towers to the fortress core are crafted from astral driftmetal (hardness 12; hp 360 each; break DC 45) and measure 200 feet long each.

Creatures: Each fortress is defended by 64 3rd-level githyanki fighters, plus two 7th-level sergeants (called sarths), one 9th-level captain (called the kith'rak), and a juvenile red dragon. The total force counts as one EL 18 encounter once all of the fortress's defenses are bought to bear, since the githyanki sarths can move quickly through the Astral Plane or use their quickened *dimension door* abilities to "hop about" (and bring limited reinforcements through the *dimension door*) instantaneously.

Development: Any attack launched against a fortress brings immediate aid from 1d4 adjacent fortresses. The flying fortresses are close enough that githyanki sarths and kith'raks can use *dimension door* to reach nearby platforms, bringing additional troops with them.

DEREK THOMPSON

1A. LOWER LEVEL

Jutting from the "underside" of the fortress is an octagonal stone tower enclosed by a 3-foot-high iron-wrought battlement. Eight ballistae are mounted along the edge of the tower, poised to fire in various directions. Hinges on the mounts allow the ballistae to point straight up or tilt down, as required. Next to each ballista rests an unlocked iron trunk containing 6 *+1 flaming ballista bolts* (which deal 3d6+1 points of damage plus 1d6 points of fire damage each) and 6 normal ballista bolts.

A 5-foot-diameter, 20-foot-long shaft connects a circular hole in the floor of the tower roof to the fortress core. No ladder or other fixture fills the chute, but one can easily navigate the shaft by thought, per movement on the Astral Plane.

1B. NEXUS

This core chamber connects to almost every other room in the fortress proper. A smooth, 5-foot-diameter shaft in the "floor" leads to the tower on the fortress's underbelly (area **1A**). A similar shaft leads up to the main hall (area **1G**). Oval archways lead to areas **1C**–**1F**. Ambient light from the surrounding chambers provides dim illumination here.

1C. BARRACKS

Three windows allow the silver luminescence of the Astral Plane to illuminate the room. The central window is a 6-foot-diameter circular hole open to the sky—wide enough for the juvenile dragon or any other Large creature to pass through expeditiously.

1D. SARTHS' QUARTERS

The githyanki sarths lair here, although they are usually found roaming the fortress.

1E. KITH'RAK'S QUARTERS

The captain's chamber contains a tall chair behind a somewhat imperious desk. When not roaming the fortress or reporting to superiors in the city, the githyanki kith'rak resides here.

Treasure: The desk contains a cleverly hidden secret drawer (DC 33 Search check) that and holds a collection of 1d6 potions (roll randomly).

1F. DRAGON'S DEN

This chamber holds the kith'rak's juvenile red dragon mount and its small collection of coins (a token reward for the dragon's loyalty). Three windows set into a wall allow the Astral Plane's silvery luster to illuminate the chamber. The central window is actually a circular, 6-foot-diameter gaping aperture that the dragon uses to enter and leave the chamber.

Creature: Not surprisingly, the juvenile red dragon has a fiery temperament, and it eagerly accepts any invitation to battle. Although the dragon is small enough to navigate the more constricting areas of the fortress, it prefers to fight in this room or out in the silver void.

Tactics: The dragon is trained to work well with the dragons in neighboring fortresses, using aid another and flanking tactics to take down hard-to-hit prey. The dragon also knows that its wings are not required to propel it through the silver void, which means it can hover in place and attack with its wings as well as its claws, bite, and tail.

Treasure: The dragon floats in the air when it sleeps. The dragon's hoard lies in the middle of the floor: 2d6 × 1,000 cp, 1d8 × 1,000 sp, 1d4 × 1,000 gp, 1d6 gems (500 gp each), 1d4 pieces of jewelry (1,000 gp each), and 1d4 masterwork items (usually armor, shields, or weapons). If the heroes plunder more than one dragon's hoard, feel free to replace the gems and jewelry with other nonmagical items of comparable value (goblets, flagons, amphoras, statuettes, ceremonial daggers, bejeweled combs, golden holy symbols, and so on).

1G. GATHERING HALL

A 5-foot-diameter shaft in the middle of the floor leads to area **1B**. The mouth of the shaft is ornately carved to resemble the open mouth of a great fresco carved into the surrounding floor—one that depicts the mighty, screaming visage of Gith. The chamber itself is square, with open windows that archers can use to fire upon enemies outside (while reaping the benefits of three-quarters cover).

Two long tables with matching benches are the chamber's sole furnishings.

1H. TETHERED GUARD SATELLITE

Imagine a floating ball of jagged rock with two stout octagonal towers, one built atop the rock and another mounted underneath it, seemingly upside-down. Imagine a smooth, 5-foot-diameter shaft boring through the middle of the rock to connect the two towers, each of which has protruding wooden balconies equipped with ballistae. Finally, imagine that the whole thing is tethered to a larger fortress by a 200-foot-long iron chain, and you have an accurate picture of this peculiar, floating structure.

Each of these satellites has an "upper" and a "lower" tower, although orientation in the Astral Plane renders such classifications purely subjective. Without gravity hindering them, the githyanki guarding these towers can move between the levels without having to adjust their orientation to match a dominant gravity field.

Each tower balcony has three ballistae with adjustable mounts that enable the weapons to point in various directions

(including straight up). Next to each ballista rests an unlocked iron trunk containing 12 nonmagical ballista bolts.

Creatures: Each satellite encircling the main fortress houses twelve 3rd-level githyanki guards—six on the "upper" tower and six on the "lower" tower.

GUARD STATISTICS

Guard, Male and Female Githyanki Ftr 3: Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 3d10+9; hp 30; Init +2; Spd 20 ft., fly 130 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; BAB +3; Grap +5; Atk/Full Atk +7 melee (2d6+3/19–20, masterwork greatsword) or +5 ranged (1d8+2/×3, composite longbow [+2 Str]); SA *psionics;* SQ darkvision 60 ft., *psionics,* SR 8; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +3, Knowledge (the planes) +2, Listen +2, Ride +6, Spot +2. *Feats:* Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

Possessions: Breastplate, masterwork greatsword, composite longbow (+2 Str) with 20 arrows.

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 9). Caster level 3rd.

Sarth, Male and Female Githyanki Ftr 7: Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 7d10+21; hp 64; Init +2; Spd 20 ft., fly 130 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17; BAB +7; Grap +10; Atk +12 melee (2d6+7/19–20, *+1 greatsword*) or +10 ranged (1d8+4/×3, composite longbow [+3 Str] with *+1 arrow*); Atk +12/+7 melee (2d6+7/19–20, *+1 greatsword*) or +10/+5 ranged (1d8+4/×3, composite longbow [+3 Str] with *+1 arrow*); SA *psionics;* SQ darkvision 60 ft., *psionics,* SR 12; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +5, Knowledge (the planes) +3, Listen +5, Ride +10, Spot +5. *Feats:* Alertness, Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

Possessions: +2 breastplate, +1 greatsword, composite longbow (+3 Str) with 25 *+1 arrows.*

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 9), *dimension door.* Caster level 7th.

Kith'rak, Male or Female Githyanki Ftr 9: Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 9d10+27; hp 81; Init +2; Spd 20 ft., fly 130 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 19; BAB +9; Grap +12; Atk +14 melee (2d6+7/17–20, *+1 keen greatsword*) or +13 ranged (1d8+5/×3 plus 1d6 fire, composite longbow [+3 Str] with *+2 flaming arrow*); Atk +14/+9 melee (2d6+7/17–20, +1 keen greatsword) or +13/+8 ranged (1d8+5/×3 plus 1d6 fire, composite longbow [+3 Str] with *+2 flaming arrow*); SA *psionics;* SQ darkvision 60 ft., *psionics,* spell resistance 14; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills: Intimidate +7, Knowledge (the planes) +5, Listen +5, Ride +10, Spot +5. *Feats:* Alertness, Iron Will, Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Ride-By Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

Possessions: +2 astral driftmetal breastplate, +1 keen greatsword, composite longbow (+3 Str) with 25 *+2 flaming arrows.*

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 9), *dimension door, plane shift* (DC 16) *telekinesis* (DC 14). Caster level 9th.

Juvenile Red Dragon: hp 168; *Monster Manual* 75.

THE SACRED ORDER OF MAN-BEASTS

The Sacred Order of Man-Beasts, also known as "The Reborn," are an order of monks and druids dedicated to the natural order of things—that is, the honoring of the land and the bestial nature that is in the heart of man (as they view it). As an order they actively seek to stem, and ultimately reverse, the advancement of civilization. The Agents and Allies featuring the NPC Lone Tooth, by Peter Adkison, presents a member of this unique society.

ALIGNMENT AND PHILOSOPHY

The order's alignment tends toward lawful neutral. Their leanings toward lawfulness are due to the influence of the monks in the order, which drives the order to a systemic, structured approach to their plans. About half of the order's druids are also lawful neutral. The druids who are not lawful neutral help maintain debate and a certain degree of healthy tension in the group, but rarely get their way on major issues. The order veers away from evil due to its respect for nature and all things natural; it is offended by the wanton, careless destruction typical of most evil. However the order is also offended by the destruction and pollution of nature that comes at the hands of civilization, believing strongly that all being should live in harmony with the land—in fact, the order believes in this so strongly that it uses violence to enforce its views. Since the violence could be directed at the woodsmen of fair races, the order would not be considered a force for good by most.

The order believes that, ultimately, all beings should seek to live as one with nature, ideally as an animal life form. Animals are viewed as the most sacred of all life: pure, wild, driven by instinct, ranging free, taking only what they need and living at one with the earth. Given this pursuit, members of the Sacred Order of Man-Beasts see the druidic spell, *reincarnation,* as the most desirable end for all.

VIEWS ON REINCARNATION

The order offers free *reincarnation* spells to any being who has passed on. If a dead body is brought to an outpost of the order they freely *reincarnate* the soul using the standard spell. Occasionally, either to make a point or simply to advance their cause, a higher level member of the order will go to the scene of a battle or other place where many recently-dead corpses lie and casts multiple reincarnation spells. Areas where this order is active have a higher-than-normal population of reincarnated beings.

THE RITUAL OF REBIRTH

The most interesting ritual is reserved for the devout members of the order. Upon reaching 9th level or higher (in any combination of classes, as long as at least five of the levels are in monk or druid), members of the order can partake in the Ritual of Rebirth. In the ritual, the devotee is essentially slain and then reincarnated using the *dire reincarnation* spell (a new spell—see below). *Dire reincarnation* is a higher level version of the reincarnate spell that provides a selection of outcomes that is more in line with the order's goals. The only outcome of a casting of this spell is to be reborn as a dire animal, serving the order's goal of "returning to nature." Furthermore, the outcomes are very powerful animals so that devotees can continue to serve the order and act as more effective natural guardians of its goals and secrets.

Dire Reincarnation

Transmutation
Level: Drd 8
Components: V, S, M, DF
Casting Time: 1 hour
Range: Touch
Target: Dead creature touched
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None; see text
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

This spell works exactly as the *reincarnate* spell found in the *Player's Handbook*, except the list of possible new forms consists only of dire animals (see below). In addition, the entire body of the deceased creature need not be present for the casting of *dire reincarnate*. A portion of the body is sufficient. The creature can also have been dead for a longer period of time prior to the spell's casting, up to one month per caster level.

d%	Incarnation	Str	Dex	Con
01–13	Dire rat	+0	+6	+2
14–26	Dire weasel	+4	+8	+0
27–39	Dire badger	+4	+6	+8
40–50	Dire bat	+6	+12	+6
51–59	Dire ape	+12	+4	+4
60–68	Dire wolverine	+12	+6	+8
69–77	Dire wolf	+14	+4	+6
78–84	Dire boar	+16	+0	+6
85–90	Dire lion	+14	+4	+6
91–96	Dire bear	+20	+2	+4
97–100	Dire tiger	+16	+4	+6

As with *reincarnate*, the subject of a *dire reincarnate* spell gains all abilities associated with its new form, including forms of movement and speeds, natural armor, natural attacks, extraordinary abilities, and the like.

A *wish* or *miracle* spell can restore a reincarnated character to his or her original form, although the reincarnated creature can resist if it chooses (Will negates).

Material Component: Rare oils and unguents worth a total of at least 5,000 gp, spread over the remains.

Like what you see?
This Web enhancement is only a sample of the suplemental material for issue #100. Coming soon to www.paizo.com, another adventure's worth of content featuring your very own guided tour of Tu'narath, githyanki capital and home of the Lich Queen. We'll be offering it for sale, along with several accompanying maps, very soon on our website.
Stay tuned!

DUNGEON 100 MAP CORRECTIONS

CARTOGRAPHY BY PETER WHITLEY

We try to get them all right, all the time, but sometimes we blow it. In two of the adventures in issue #100, three maps were improperly or inaccurately labeled. Below you'll find the three maps with corrections. The first two are for "Old Embers Never Die," and the last is for "Woe to Mistledale." Our apologies for the errors.

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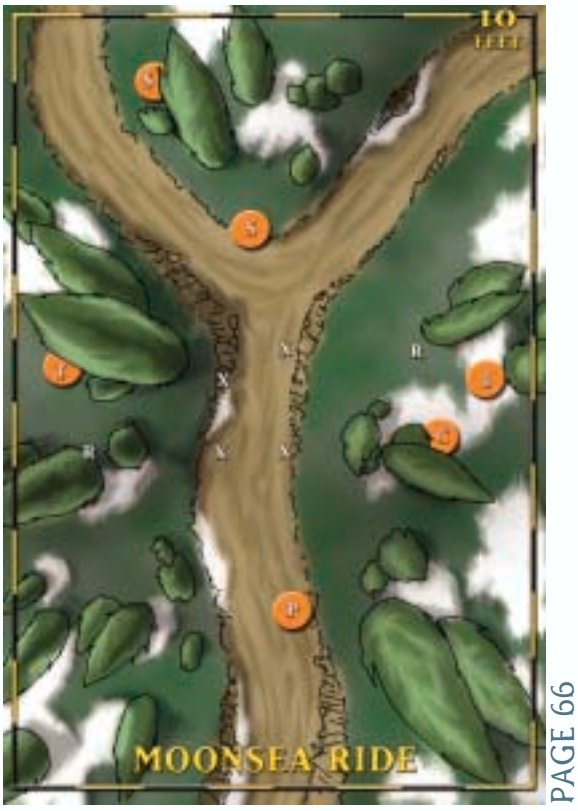

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Dungeon WEB SUPPLEMENT
ISSUE 100

WELCOME TO TU'NARATH

BY CHRISTOPHER PERKINS
ARTWORK BY JAMES RYMAN, NIKLASS JANSSON & MARK SASSO

This Web supplement designed for "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" assumes you have a copy of issue #100 containing both the adventure and the poster map of Tu'narath, the githyanki capital city. Although the poster map of Tu'narath shows only its "upper" side (where most of the city's population gathers), one can just as easily walk along the "edges" and "underside" to reach structures and regions located there.

For more general information about Tu'narath, its occupants, its architecture, and its laws, see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" adventure.

APPROACHING AND LEAVING TU'NARATH

Protecting the city are more than a dozen fortresses built into large fragments of rock adrift in the Astral Plane. When an unfamiliar astral ship or astral-faring retinue approaches Tu'narath, the nearest "flying fortress" dispatches an escort to intercept the approaching vessel or retinue: a githyanki kith'rak (captain) astride a juvenile red dragon. When approaching an astral ship, the dragon positions itself outside the firing arcs of the ship's visible weaponry, but drifts close enough to blast the decks with its fiery breath, if necessary. See the issue #100 Web enhancement and the poster map of Tu'narath for details on these orbiting fortresses.

When confronting a githyanki retinue or githyanki-crewed astral ship, the githyanki kith'rak merely ushers the vessel to the city docks before returning to the flying fortress.

When confronting a retinue that includes nongithyanki, the kith'rak demands to know their business in Tu'narath and instructs nongithyanki to confine themselves to the Merchant District (area 7), lest they be killed on sight. If the visitors are belligerent or recognized as enemies of the githyanki people, the kith'rak and its dragon mount attack immediately. This draws the attention of nearby flying fortresses, which send reinforcements (see area 1).

When confronting a vessel populated by nongithyanki, the githyanki kith'rak requires that the vessel undergo a thorough search before proceeding. The kith'rak uses his or her dimension door ability to appear on deck and begins systematically inspecting every compartment and container on the ship—a process taking several minutes. Meanwhile, the dragon circles the ship, ready to blast it with fire if the crew turns against the kith'rak or takes other rash actions. If the kith'rak finds nothing amiss, he or she directs the crew to follow the dragon to the docks of the Merchant District (area 7). A stern warning follows: Any deviation in course will result in the destruction of the ship and its crew.

If the kith'rak's search of the ship reveals dangerous cargo, known criminals, or racial enemies (githzerai, illithids, or psurlons), the kith'rak orders the red dragon to blast the vessel with its fiery breath. All of the flying fortresses around the city are alerted and send reinforcements, as needed. If everything appears in order, the kith'rak uses his or her *dimension door* ability to return to the circling dragon, at which point they escort the ship to the city docks.

Leaving Tu'narath is generally simpler than arriving. Unless the githyanki have a good reason to prevent an astral ship or retinue from leaving the city—for example, they suspect that a githzerai might be hiding among an astral ship's crew—they let the visitors depart unsearched and unimpeded.

Githyanki Kith'rak: hp 102; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Juvenile Red Dragon: hp 168; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

CITY FEATURES

The following features are common throughout the city.

DOORS AND WINDOWS

A building's outer doors are single slabs of elaborately worked stone set with iron hinges and good-quality locks (Open Lock DC 30). Interior doors are made of reinforced wood brought to the Astral Plane from various other planes and often have average locks set into them (Open Lock DC 25). Windows come equipped with openable glass panes and ornate lattices of iron bars to discourage unwanted intrusion.

Outer (Stone) Door: 2 in. thick; hardness 8; hp 30; break DC 25.

Inner (Good Wooden) Door: 1-1/2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 15; break DC 18.

Window (Iron) Bars: 1 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 30; break DC 28.

WALLS, FLOORS, AND CEILINGS

Skillfully wrought carvings of githyanki champions and battle scenes elaborate the outer walls of most public and civic buildings. Inner and outer walls are of superior masonry. Ground floors are made of smooth stone, sometimes covered with wooden planks, while upper stories consist of wooden tiles or planks set atop thick wooden beams.

Unless otherwise noted, ceilings inside buildings are 15 feet tall.

Superior Masonry Walls: 1 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 90 per 10-foot-square section; break DC 35; climb DC 15.

Ground (Flagstone) Floors: 1 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 90 per 10-foot-square section; break DC 35.

Upper (Reinforced Wooden) Floors: 6 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 60 hp per 10-foot-square section; break DC 20.

ILLUMINATION

The silver void of the Astral Plane, though dark and ominous in places, provides the city with perpetual light equivalent to an overcast afternoon on the Material Plane. Creatures that normally shun the sun (like mind flayers) can function normally here.

CITY ENCOUNTERS

The following encounters are keyed to the poster map of Tu'narath.

1. FLYING FORTRESSES

For a complete description of the flying fortress, see the free Web enhancement for issue #100 at **www.paizo.com**.

2. ARTISAN DISTRICT

Githyanki use combat, dress, and craft as means to express their individuality. Githyanki artisans, or mlar, specialize in the construction and repair of buildings, tools, weapons, astral ships, and other needed things, but others create sculptures and art pieces. Entire districts of Tu'narath are given over to the mlar, some of whom rely on item creation feats and spells such as *fabricate* and *wall of stone* to complete their works. Some mlar are powerful wizards in their own right, and though they are quick to rally to the city's defense, they have chosen a life apart from the military.

Githyanki artisans both live and work in the Artisan Districts of Tu'narath. Low-level mlar tend to work in great factories and foundries, while mid- to high-level mlar own shops, forges, and "studios." These districts are decorated with statuary, and even the most common buildings have elaborate bas-reliefs on the outer walls and fearsome gargoyles clutching the stone eaves.

Development: Nongithyanki are not welcome in the Artisan District and are arrested on sight. Apprehended characters are taken to The Will of Gith (area **13**) to face punishment; those who resist arrest are killed.

3. FARMER DISTRICT

Inhabitants of the Astral Plane never suffer from hunger or thirst, so there is little need for supplies of food and water. However, githyanki and their red dragon mounts journey to other planes regularly, which usually requires that they bring supplies of food with them. For this reason, Tu'narath has githyanki farmers, or g'lathk. The Farmer District is where the g'lathk live and tend the city's food supply. Large enclosures illuminated by *continual flame* spells and magically enhanced so time passes normally (so plants can grow and mature) hold fungi gardens, while livestock brought to Tu'narath from other planes are herded into caverns beneath the city or allowed to roam about in small pens on the surface.

Githyanki and red dragon "livestock" includes everything from rothé to chained humanoid captives (goblins, kobolds, gnomes, dwarves, halflings, elves, humans, bariaurs, and other "cattle").

In addition to livestock, the g'lathk oversee the disposal of the city's waste by monitoring caverns of giant bombardier beetles, which quickly consume the refuse and offal.

Creatures: G'lathk are typically commoners. Githyanki soldiers (see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for statistics) are assigned to watch over the more intelligent or dangerous livestock, and githyanki assigned to the task usually consider it a punishment.

Development: Nongithyanki are not welcome in the Farmer District and are arrested on sight. Apprehended characters are taken to The Will of Gith (area **13**) to face punishment; those who resist arrest are killed.

4. MERCHANT DISTRICT

Located on one of the city's protruding middle arms, the Merchant District is the only section of Tu'narath open to nongithyanki. Githyanki vigilantly patrol the streets that connect to the rest of the city, and many of the buildings near the boundary of the Merchant District are empty tenements or githyanki guard barracks.

The Merchant District is not maintained as immaculately as other districts, but it is far from dirty and disheveled. The most squalid structures are located among the warehouses at the arm's extremis, near the docks. A few large residences dominate the district's skyline, but most of the buildings are densely packed apartments available for rent at an average cost of 1 gp per room (per 24-hour

period). Since nongithyanki cannot own property in Tu'narath, all buildings have a githyanki landlord (or nil'ghar) who usually lives elsewhere in the city; most landlords are githyanki knights who were bequeathed the estates as rewards for loyal service. They use lower-ranked githyanki or nongithyanki hirelings to collect rental payments and and deal with unwanted tenants.

Creatures: Githyanki who tend to reside in the district include merchants accustomed to dealing with nongithyanki. A githyanki merchant occupies one of the district's larger residences and is typically a gish (see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for statistics). Guarding the merchant's estate is a squad of twelve githyanki soldiers, plus two githyanki sarths (sergeants) and a githyanki kith'rak (captain).

Outside the residence, a githyanki merchant travels in an iron-wrought carriage that walks on four spidery legs. The merchant controls the actions of the carriage, which can hold up to two Large creatures, four Medium creatures, or eight Small creatures. Anyone inside the carriage gains cover against attacks from outside. When traveling in the district, the merchant, the captain, and the two sergeants remain inside the carriage while the guards encircle it.

- **Githyanki Soldiers (12):** hp 34; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.
- **Githyanki Sarths (2):** hp 51 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.
- **Githyanki Kith'rak:** hp 102; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.
- **Githyanki Gish (merchant):** hp 24; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.
- **Walking Iron Carriage:** Huge animated object; hp 84; *Monster Manual* 13.

5. THE MORNINGSTAR INN

The most popular and expensive inn in Tu'narath is The Morningstar. A rhyme-addled tiefling bard named Rhapsody Nethervane runs the establishment and employs two henchmen: a half-celestial dwarf named Dwern and a half-fiend dwarf named Maggoth who constantly try to steer Rhapsody down paths of light and darkness. Rhapsody first encountered the dwarves on separate planar adventures. When all of her adventuring companions perished, she made the dwarves offers they could not refuse and now keeps them around largely for her amusement—but they also make great bouncers.

The Morningstar is an impressive two-story stone edifice with iron-barred windows, broad gables, frightful gargoyles, and flying buttresses. The establishment sports no sign, but a loud ruckus emanates from the common room (area **5A**) at all hours of the endless, astral day.

A one-way portal on the Material Plane leads to one of the bedrooms on the upper floor of the inn (area **5L**). This portal existed long before Rhapsody took over the establishment, and she hasn't seen fit to remove it. In fact, she feels the portal adds to the building's character, despite the fact that not everything that comes through the portal brings sunshine and good tidings.

Refer to the map of The Morningstar Inn for the following keyed encounters.

5A. COMMON ROOM

> An octagonal wooden bar, painted black and adorned with astral whalebone, stands in the middle of an octagonal common room. A scantily clad young woman with cloven hooves instead of feet stands on the bar with a flagon in one hand, regaling patrons with a sordid song about the Naughty Gnome of Amoria. A tiny, incandescent blue orb whirls about the woman's head as she croons and capers.
>
> Tables and chairs surround the bar, and the ceiling soars to its peak 40 feet overhead. Stairs crawl up the walls to an overlooking balcony. Under the balcony, a double archway invites deeper excursions into the establishment. Large fires fill a double hearth set into the opposite wall. Standing on either side of it is a dour dwarf. One has alabaster-white skin, opalescent eyes, a golden beard, and feathered wings. The other has bat wings, eyes like dying embers, and a smoldering ash-gray beard.
>
> Mounted above the hearth are three broken weapons: a greatsword, a quarterstaff, and a waraxe. An ugly iron chandelier hangs by a chain over the bar, its continual flames illuminating the room and casting many shadows.

The sundered masterwork weapons—as the inn's proprietor is quick to tell—are all that remains of Rhapsody's former adventuring colleagues. "No finer lot has the Reaper got," she sings morbidly. The fighter, monk, and cleric "died screamin' in the jaws of a demon." She strongly advises against "dancing with a goristro in the pale moonlight. Its teeth are hard as iron spikes, and its breath is—what's the word?—yikes." Her rhymes cause Dwern and several of the inn's patrons to roll their eyes, while Maggoth snickers idly. Although Rhapsody doesn't always speak or sing in rhyme, she rarely goes an entire conversation without some word play or turn of phrase.

If the characters make themselves comfortable or approach the bar, Rhapsody has some bar patrons help her to the floor so she can greet them properly. Read or paraphrase the following at this time:

> "Forgive my poor manners," says the woman as she's helped down from the bar. "My father's side, you know. He's also to

blame for my dismal dancing—ah, the pain of having two cleft feet. Seriously, though, my name is Rhapsody Nethervane, the proprietor of The Morningstar. Can I offer you a cold beverage, a cozy bed, or something warm instead? Perhaps a fine wine or pale ale? Flute or flagon, you pick the wagon. I also carry Stygian Draft. It's bitter swill and hard on the nose, but it'll help you forget your recent woes. Sorry for the rhyme—I do it all the time. Well, maybe not all the time."

Rhapsody offers a bed for 1 gp per 24-hour stay (and a key to the room), a glass of cool wine for 1 sp, and a mug of warm ale for 2 cp. Her charm and pleasant demeanor are free. She calls the inn's owner—a capricious githyanki knight named Suluk'ai—"his overlordship" or, more sarcastically, "the one that got away." She admires the githyanki as much as hates them and enjoys both telling them secrets and hiding things from them.

Creatures: Rhapsody is a flaxen-haired, 5-foot-tall tiefling with a bronze complexion that turns to scales on her shoulders and hips. The backs of her ears have small, bony ridges, and her cloven feet give her a gait overly thunderous for one so small. Although she can be a font of information about Tu'narath and its denizens, few clients are eager to trust her chaotic nature, as Rhapsody has no compunctions about sharing private information with the githyanki if it keeps them off her case. She is also willing to accept bribes. Her only loyalty is to herself; everyone else is "delightful, in a red-capped gnome sort of way."

The only time Rhapsody suffers a crisis of conscience is when Dwern browbeats her into doing the right thing ("words of wisdom from Dwern the Taciturn!"), but she is equally apt to heed Maggoth's corrupt, often ill-conceived advice ("Maggoth, you evil weevil!").

Despite their opposing alignments, both dwarves are willing to sacrifice their lives to defend the tiefling bard, and not because she bought them matching magic waraxes for their birthdays.

Dwern Splinteraxe: hp 125; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Maggoth Ashbeard: hp 68; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Rhapsody Nethervane: hp 49; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Tactics: If she is attacked, Rhapsody casts *haste*, *greater invisibility*, and *displacement* on herself, then uses *dimension door* to reach a safer location and casts cure spells on herself, if necessary. When sorely pressed, she uses *hold monster*, *shout*, and *Tasha's hideous laughter* to temper or incapacitate foes before fleeing to safety. Dwern draws forth his waraxe and wades in combat, while Maggoth maneuvers into a position where he can flank prey and deal sneak attack damage or make an opportunistic strike. Characters who get within 5 feet of Maggoth detect a strong brimstone odor emanating from the dwarf.

5B. KITCHEN

This spacious kitchen contains work tables, unlocked cabinets of dishware and food supplies, hanging pots, counters with drawers of utensils, a wooden wash basin, a fireplace, and a box filled with wood and kindling. A large soup kettle and smaller kettle hang from hooks in the hearth. A broom leans in the corner between the doors.

5C. DWERN'S ROOM

The door to this room is locked, and both Rhapsody and Dwern carry keys. A *continual flame* spell cast on a sconce near the window illuminates the chamber.

A large hearth dominates one wall of this tidy, handsomely appointed bedchamber. Silver furs cover a couch near the fireplace, and a plush chair and table rests nearby. Hanging on the walls are three tapestries depicting the platinum dragon Bahamut battling a score of red dragons, the dwarven stronghold of Erackinor on Solania (Celestia's fourth layer), and archons flitting around the gem-encrusted ziggurat of Yetsira on Jovar (Celestia's sixth layer). A circular embroidered rug covers half of the floor. In the middle of the rug sits a heavy wooden trunk with iron clasps and hinges.

Treasure: A good-quality lock shaped like a scowling dwarf visage (Open Lock DC 30) seals the lid of Dwern's trunk, which contains a suit of dwarf-sized masterwork half-plate, a *+1 spiked gauntlet*, several changes of clothes, and a sack holding 320 sp, 450 gp, and 5 gems (500 gp each).

5D. COMMODE

A curtain covers the doorway to this small room, which contains an open-seated chair with a chamber pot underneath. Some towels hang from iron hooks on the walls. The room holds nothing else.

5E. PILLARED HALL

Twenty slender pillars carved to resemble proud githyanki warriors support the 20-foot-high ceiling. The warriors clutch stone greatswords and stare intently at anyone passing through the middle of the room. Iron sconces lit by flickering *continual flame* spells illuminate the area. The doors leading to the guest rooms (area **5G**) are all locked.

5F. MAGGOTH'S ROOM

The door to this room is locked, and both Rhapsody and Maggoth carry keys. The room is dimly lit (see below) and smells of brimstone. The window's drapes are pulled.

A dark fireplace stretches along one wall. Near it, resting on the floor, is a scorched iron chest (see **Treasure** below). Next to the chest sits a padded chair covered with the scaly red hide of some infernal beast. A foul-smelling smoking pipe rests on the left arm of the chair.

Across from the fireplace rests Maggoth's "bed"—a stout, claw-footed iron tub filled with glowing coals. Although the coals are searing hot, Maggoth's resistance to fire protects him from the damage. A bellows fashioned from wood and flaps of dragon wing juts from the belly of the tub. Maggoth uses the bellows to "fire up" the coals before he relaxes.

Treasure: A masterfully crafted lock (Open Lock DC 40) seals the iron chest. The chest contains some ill-kept clothes, a pair of black leather boots and matching gloves, a ragged leather kit containing Maggoth's thieves' tools, a bundle of 24 tindertwigs, and an ebony box (50 gp) containing a stash of pipeweed. A secret compartment in the chest's lid (Search DC 25) contains a *potion of cure serious wounds*.

5G. DOWNSTAIRS GUEST ROOMS

Each room is locked (Open Lock DC 25) and contains a single bed, a wooden dresser with three drawers, and a tall wardrobe. Rhapsody rents a room for 1 gp per 24-hour stay. Although visitors to the Astral Plane do not require rest, the beds are provided for relaxation.

5H. GUESTS' ENTRANCE

Guests who do not wish to enter the establishment through the common room (area **5A**) can use the back door instead. The door is locked (Open Lock DC 30), but any of the guest keys can unlock it. The area is lit by the silvery void, as seen through the windows that follow the steps up.

5I. UPPER HALL

This hall is lit by flickering *continual flame* spells cast upon iron sconces mounted to the walls at 20-foot intervals. A crimson carpet stretches the length of the corridor, stopping just short of the balcony overlooking the common room (area **5A**). Chatter from the common room echoes down the hall.

5J. UPSTAIRS GUEST ROOMS

Each room is locked (Open Lock DC 25) and contains a pair of beds, two matching wooden dressers (with three drawers apiece), a small writing desk, and a tall wardrobe with a mirror mounted on the inside of the door. Although visitors to the Astral Plane do not require rest, the beds are provided for relaxation. Each room costs 1 gp to rent per 24-hour period, or one can rent an entire room for double the price.

5K. BELVELIOS'S SUITE

Belvelios, an ogre mage merchant who uses *polymorph* to appear human, claims this room. The average lock on the door has been replaced with three amazing-quality locks (Open Lock DC 40). A *knock* spell disables two of the regular locks, but the third lock remains secure.

The chamber's furnishings include a handsome roll-top writing desk, a table with three matching chairs, a mirror in a standing wooden frame, and a mechanically spun planar orrery fashioned from bits of metal and crystal (showing an accurate cosmology of the multiverse).

The dresser contains the mercane's spare clothing and worthless trinkets. The desk holds several pieces of parchment, some quills and jars of ink, and a few handwritten contracts with various recent arrivals to Tu'narath seeking magic items and other hard-to-find knick-knacks. The items are neither valuable nor incriminating.

Creatures: The merchant Belvelios finds Rhapsody amusing, but he knows better than to share secrets with a tiefling. The ogre mage resides at the Morningstar Inn because it is comfortable and because it sees its fair share of "planewalkers" and local gossip. Belvelios knows about the portal in area **5L** and tries to do business with anyone who comes through it. He knows a great deal about the Astral Plane and its denizens—information he shares free of charge. The earthquakes that rattle Tu'narath trouble him, but not deeply; like most residents, he sees them as natural occurrences and the "hazards of doing business on the Astral Plane."

Belvelios has connections among certain githyanki warlocks capable of brewing potions, scribing scrolls, forging rings, and crafting various other magic items (things he is generally unwilling to do himself). If the characters need a specific magic item, the Blue Merchant is their best chance of obtaining it legally in Tu'narath. However, Belvelios marks up all prices by 25% to cover "handling and delivery."

Belvelios the Blue Merchant (ogre mage): hp 43; *Monster Manual* 200.

Tactics: Belvelios is secretly allied with the Sha'sal Khou (see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" adventure for more information). He offers to share information about the githyanki Lich-Queen over a nice dinner (even though denizens on the Astral Plane don't feel hunger). He knows

that the Lich-Queen has enemies in the city and suggests the heroes intent on defeating the Lich-Queen forge a temporary alliance with Zetch'r'r, a githyanki warlord who has a stronghold in the city. The stronghold, called J'ryn'zalas (area **14**), is located in a district off-limits to nongithyanki.

Belvelios avoids combat using quickened *gaseous form* and *invisibility* spells.

Treasure: Belvelios's planar orrery stands 4 feet tall and weighs 170 pounds. A successful DC 25 Knowledge (the planes) check allows one to use the orrery to determine the relation or location of one plane with respect to another. For instance, one could use the orrery to determine whether two planes are coterminous, coexistent, or separate. A successful DC 35 Knowledge (the planes) check enables one to use the orrery to determine the physical, elemental, energy, alignment, or magic traits of a specific plane; the user must choose the type of trait and the plane before making the check. The orrery has hardness 5 and 30 hit points. It is mechanical (not magical) in nature and worth 5,000 gp intact.

5L. PORTAL ROOM

The door to this room is locked (Open Lock DC 30) but can be opened easily from the inside. The room contains a pair of comfortable beds, a modest nightstand, a pair of matching dressers, and a tall wardrobe with an oval mirror mounted on the inside of the door.

An invisible 3-foot-wide, 7-foot-tall extraplanar gate blends seamlessly with the wall located to the right of the door. Under the scrutiny of a *true seeing* spell, the portal appears as a faintly luminescent rectangular outline on the wall. The gate forms a one-way portal from the Material Plane; as the gate is one-way only, characters cannot use it to return to the Material Plane.

Rhapsody, her staff, and most of her regular patrons know about the portal.

6. KYN'DL STREET

Kyn'dl Street wends through a densely packed cluster of shops in the Merchant District, a few scant blocks from where the district converges with the rest of the githyanki city. Arched stone bridges connect some of the buildings' upper levels, 20 feet above street level. They are carved with leering, gargoylish faces and allow dwellers on the upper floors to move more quickly between buildings.

Arched Stone Bridge: 1 1/2 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 135 per 10-ft.-square section; break DC 40.

The merchants who operate shops on this street work whatever hours please them. To determine whether a given shop is open or closed, roll 1d4; on a roll of 1, the shop is closed.

The following keyed encounters refer to the map of Kyn'dl Street.

6A. YONRAUTH'S ACID EMPORIUM

A wrought-iron sign shaped like a coiled black dragon hangs over the door of this dank shop. Skillfully burned into the door itself are the words "Yonrauth's Acid Emporium," written in Draconic. An iron rack in front of the window displays several flasks of caustic compounds, each one properly labeled in Draconic as well. Several more flasks of acid rest on shelves about the store.

Creature: The proprietor, a human wizard named Yonrauth, sells acids of varying potency by the flask. Yonrauth seems on edge when asked to discuss his neighbors. He occasionally hears githyanki voices coming from the apartment adjacent to his (area **6K**). Since githyanki generally avoid living in the Merchant District, Yonrauth suspects that the ones lurking in the supposedly vacant apartment are spying on someone—although he knows not whom.

Yonrauth, Male Human Wiz 9: AL N; use **Table 4–22: NPC Wizard** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to generate statistics and equipment, if necessary. In addition to his gear, Yonrauth carries keys to the doors to his shop, storeroom (area **6I**), and apartment (area **6J**).

Treasure: Yonrauth has the several types of acid for sale, including the following:

Acid Type	Cost per Flask	Damage (Direct Hit/Splash)*
Ankheg Extract	10 gp	1d6/1
Digester Spray	50 gp	2d6/1d3
Blood of Dissolution	120 gp	3d6/1d6
Devilbrine	180 gp	4d6/2d6 (to chaotic creatures only)
Slaad Ichor	180 gp	4d6/2d6 (to lawful creatures only)
Wyrmdrool	200 gp	5d6/2d6

**A flask of acid deals splash damage to all creatures within 5 feet of where it lands.*

6B. ORLISPAR'S CANDLEWORKS

The window of this candle shop features an impressive display, from simple tapers to elaborate wax sculptures. Mounted to the door is an iron sconce holding a painted wooden candle with a *continual flame* spell cast on it. The front of the shop contains rows of shelves packed with can-

dles of varying shape and size. The back of the shop serves as a work area, where the candles are fashioned.

Creatures: Orlispar, an unscrupulous efreeti who secretly serves the Ch'r'ai as a spy and informant, runs this shop. (See "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" for more information on the Ch'r'ai.) Using his *polymorph* ability, he assumes the guise of a well-dressed, well-mannered gnome merchant. Although Orlispar enjoys making ordinary candles, his inventory includes magic candles that he buys from other merchants (including Belvelios the Blue Merchant) and sells at inflated prices (see **Treasure** below).

Orlispar (efreeti): hp 65; *Monster Manual* 115.

Tactics: Orlispar avoids conflicts with powerful foes, preferring to negotiate and lie his way out of a sticky situation. If the characters detect his true nature or alignment, he conducts himself in a calm, businesslike manner, suggesting that anyone not interested in buying candles should leave. He defends himself if attacked.

Treasure: Orlispar keeps his personal treasure somewhere on the Elemental Plane of Fire, as thieves are common nuisances and threats in Tu'narath's Merchant District. However, his shop contains eleven wax spell candles etched with magical script. When a spell candle is lit as its magical script is read (requiring a successful Decipher Script check with a DC equal to 10 + the spell's level), the candle releases a spell in much the same fashion as a scroll. Orlispar's small collection of spell candles contain the following spells: *antilife shell, augury, blasphemy, contact other plane, deathwatch, detect secret doors , dictum, fire shield, mass cure critical wounds, spell turning,* and *Tenser's transformation.*

6C. VILGHOON'S CONCOCTIONS

Welded iron shutters cover the windows of this establishment, and a dark-wood door fitted with an amazing-quality lock bars entry. The door is as resilient as iron, thanks to an alchemical treatment. Above the door's architrave, a gargoyle leers at passers-by.

When any living creature comes within 5 feet of the door, a *permanent magic mouth* cast on the gargoyle says, "If you've come seeking Vilghoon's Concoctions, knock twice. If you seek Vilghoon himself, knock three times. Otherwise, bugger off!" Knocking twice magically unlocks the door (as per a *knock* spell) and disables the **Trap** (see below). Knocking three times magically unlocks the door but does not disarm the **Trap**.

Locked, Magically Reinforced Wooden Door: 2 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 60; break DC 28; Open Lock DC 40.

Welded Iron Shutters: 1 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 30; break DC 28.

Trap: Fitted into the doorframe is a scythe. The blade slashes across the open doorway and back again, striking any creature that passes through the portal.

Scythe Trap: CR 2; mechanical; proximity trigger; automatic reset; +20 melee (2d4+8/×4, scythe); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 24.

Creature: Vilghoon, a githyanki assassin, deals in poisons. (Normal poisons administered on the Astral Plane don't take effect until the poisoned creature leaves the Astral Plane.) Vilghoon "retired" two years ago after a successful and lucrative career as a spy and contract killer. His name is known—and uttered with contempt—on more planes than he cares to count. For someone of such vile infamy, Tu'narath might be one of the few safe havens in the planar omniverse. Although rotten to the core, Vilghoon deals fairly with his customers and never sells them less than what they ask for. If questioned, he might share a local rumor or two, provided he gets something in return.

Vilghoon: hp 100; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Treasure: Vilghoon has 1d8 samples of all the poisons listed in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* as well as 1d4 samples of the following new poisons he has either concocted or discovered in his planar travels:

Poison	Type	Initial Damage	Secondary Damage	DC to Create	Price
Advespa venom	Injury DC 15	1d6 Str	1d6 Str	15	300 gp
Immoth ice venom	Injury DC 19	Paralysis 1d6+2 min.	1 Int*	20	4,200 gp
Mindsnatch	Injury DC 24	1d8 Int	2d8 Int	25	2,000 gp
Kelvezu claw extract	Contact DC 19	1d6 Con	1d6 Con	20	500 gp
Eviscerum	Contact DC 25	1d6 Int*	1d6 Int*, 1d6 Wis	25	4,500 gp
Mangler mist	Inhaled DC 22	3d6 Cha	1 Cha*	25	1,800 gp
Doom's grasp	Ingested DC 28	2d6 Con	1d6 Con*	25	5,600 gp

**Permanent ability drain.*

Development: Although the poison business is quite lucrative, Vilghoon can also be hired as an assassin. He agrees to kill someone for his standard fee. He needs 1d4

days to "research" the victim, and his standard fee is 1,000 pp × the victim's level, plus the victim's possessions.

6D. APARTMENT

The door to this octagonal abode is locked (Open Lock DC 30). The ill-kept, sparsely furnished apartment beyond belongs to the proprietor of The Blade's Edge (area **6E**). Searching the messy flat for treasure takes 20 minutes and yields nothing, as no valuable items are kept here.

6E. THE BLADE'S EDGE

The shop's sign is an ornamental greatsword bolted to an iron clasp just outside the door. The shop's name has been worked into both sides of the blade, written in Dwarven on one side and Draconic on the other.

Creatures: Rhodus Ironshod, a fierce dwarf with a gargoylish sneer, runs this shop. Rhodus fashions masterwork swords from a forge that fills fully half of the shop. If someone wishes to have their sword enchanted in a special way, Rhodus can have the proper enchantments cast for double the standard fees. (He knows a githyanki warlock or two who will perform the service, but their time isn't cheap.) The dwarf does not care to sell other types of weapons and promptly dismisses anyone who comes searching for them. He does not share rumors and rarely speaks of things other than swords.

Rhodus Ironshod, Male Dwarf Ftr 8: hp 72; AL LE; use **Table 4–16: NPC Fighter** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to generate statistics and equipment, if necessary. In addition to his gear, Rhodus carries a key to his apartment (area **6D**).

Treasure: Rhodus keeps his profits in a locked iron strongbox (hardness 10; hp 60; break DC 28; Open Lock 30) hidden under the ashes in his forge. The strongbox contains 150 pp and 580 gp. Racks along the walls hold an assortment of masterwork blades: 10 daggers, 8 longswords, 5 short swords, 4 bastard swords, 3 falchions, 2 scimitars, 2 greatswords, and a two-bladed sword.

6F. WISTUN'S WONDERS

A handsome wooden sign hangs above this building's ground floor entrance. The words "Wistun's Wonders" have been written on the sign in magically luminescent silver paint. Mounted on the inside of the door is a *stone of alarm* that warns the proprietor of visitors.

Wistun's Wonders consists of three rooms: the store proper, a small hexagonal bedroom, and a back workshop with a barred window looking out into the street. Every room is immaculate—a reflection of the owner's fastidiousness.

Creature: Although no friend to the githyanki, Wistun knows most of the trustworthy merchants in the Merchant District and occasionally creates wondrous magic items for them. The wizard doesn't keep medium or major wondrous items in stock, fearing theft. From time to time, he closes up shop and heads off on some grand adventure, which gives him the experience points needed to craft his works. He travels with a group of famous dwarven adventurers called the Thunderstones. As they specialize in hunting mind flayers, the Thunderstones and their allies are rarely troubled by the githyanki.

Wistun, Male Human Wiz 15: hp 59; AL LN; use **Table 4–22: NPC Wizard** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to generate statistics and equipment, if necessary. In addition to his normal gear, Wistun hides his spellbook in a *glove of storing* worn on his right hand.

Treasure: Wistun's store contains a few oddities and collectibles that the wizard is more than happy to sell. Roll 2d6 times on **Table 7–27: Minor Wondrous Items** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (page 247) to determine the specific "trinkets" Wistun keeps for display purposes.

Development: Although he has just begun work on a *cloak of etherealness* for one of his adventuring companions, Wistun gladly puts this aside if the PCs come to him with another project. Due to the scarcity of materials in Tu'narath, his prices for items are 20% above standard. However, he guarantees timely delivery.

With a successful DC 25 Diplomacy check, PCs can persuade Wistun to scry on someone within Tu'narath or perform some other service within the means of a 15th-level wizard.

6G. GERTEL'S TINDERBOX

The words "Gertel's Tinderbox" are etched into the door's stone architrave (in Common), and the door is not locked. Shelves line the walls of the store, and a barren desk sits under the barred, curtained window that looks out onto Kyn'dl Street. Dried blood stains the walls and floor near the counter. The store is otherwise bare.

The former proprietor of this establishment, Gertel Icebane, came to a bloody end after a githyanki patrol caught him dealing with an astrally projecting mind flayer. They used *dimension door* to enter the room and hacked the wizard to pieces, but the illithid escaped. Gertel's neighbor, Augthum (see area **6H**) heard the ruckus—and Gertel's pleas for mercy—through the wall. After killing Gertel, the githyanki removed or destroyed all of his prominently displayed magical wares.

Treasure: The githyanki did not search Gertel's store thoroughly. A successful DC 30 Search check reveals that the window's sill is the lid of a secret compartment holding four *potions of nondetection* in black crystal vials with silver stoppers (15 gp each for the vials).

6H. AUGTHUM'S ASTRAL AVIARY

A wooden sign hangs by the door, pronouncing the store's name in Draconic. On the door itself hangs a plaque that reads (in Common): "Deliver a message anywhere in the void for just 10 gold pieces! Inquire within. Mind flayers NOT welcome."

Creatures: A gravelly voice beckons characters who knock to enter. Inside, eight brass cages rest on tables, dangle from iron-wrought hooks and corbels, or simply levitate in midair. The cages hold eighty birds the size of small ravens. These denizens of the Astral Plane, called astral streakers, do not utter a peep most of the time, but they chirp and caw whenever strangers open the door or enter the shop. Weaving among the cages, feeding his feathered charges, is a gruff old gnome named Augthum.

Augthum provides a messenger service to the denizens of the Merchant District. Surprisingly intelligent, the astral streakers have adapted themselves to the strange environment of the Astral Plane and use their homing instinct to reach distant astral locations quickly. They can travel to any astral locale that they have been to before in one or two days. Initially, Augthum had to familiarize them to various locations by taking them there, but each generation of birds teaches the next generation the travel routes. Augthum rarely needs to make such trips, nowadays. A note or little bundle can be tied to an astral streaker's leg, or an astral streaker can be commanded to spy on a location and return. Although he doesn't advertise the use of birds as spies, Augthum knows that many of his regular clients use them for such. One of the astral streakers is actually Augthum's familiar (treat as a raven) and can usually be found perched on the gnome's shoulder.

Augthum keeps several sheafs of paper and a large spindle of twine atop a desk in one corner of his shop. For 10 gp, a customer can buy a piece of paper and a short length of twine, tie a written note to an astral streaker, and send it somewhere on the Astral Plane. Once it delivers the message (and a response, if one is provided), it returns to Augthum's shop.

Augthum does not like to take risks, and he would think twice (maybe even three times) before crossing a githyanki. If the PCs question him about his neighbors, he does not mind talking about Gertel's demise (see area **6G**), but that's about all. He speaks well of Orlispar (see area **6B**), but admits that his "fellow gnome" does not fear the githyanki as much as he perhaps should. Although far from naive, Augthum does not realize that Orlispar is actually an efreeti in disguise.

Augthum, Male Gnome Wiz 5: hp 19; AL LN; use **Table 4–22: NPC Wizard** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to generate statistics and equipment, if necessary.

6I. YONRAUTH'S STOREROOM

Cabinets and crates line the walls of this upstairs chamber. The cabinets hold empty flasks (for storing acids), and the crates (which are used for special deliveries) are all empty. A fully stocked alchemist's lab sits atop a table in the middle of the room.

The door leading to the bridge outside is locked (Open Lock DC 30), although it can be unlocked easily from inside the room. Yonrauth (see area **6A**) carries the key to this door.

6J. YONRAUTH'S APARTMENT

Both doors to this room are locked (Open Lock DC 30), and Yonrauth carries the key that opens both. The room contains a bed, a dresser, a writing desk, a chair, and a chest with *arcane lock* and *fire trap* spells cast on it.

Trap: The *fire trap* spell cast on the chest is more of a nuisance than a lethal threat. It detonates when someone other than Yonrauth opens the chest's lid.

Chest with *Fire Trap*: CR 3; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*fire trap*, 9th-level caster, 1d4+9 fire, DC 17 Reflex save half damage); Search DC 29; Disable Device DC 29.

Treasure: The chest contains Yonrauth's spellbook, a green crystal vial shaped like an illithid's head (20 gp) that holds a *potion of cure moderate wounds*, a masterwork dagger with a 100-gp gem set into its pommel, and a sack of 19 pp and 60 gp.

6K. SPIES

This apartment contains a table and four chairs. The furnishings are unremarkable.

Creatures: Four githyanki spies from J'ryn'zalas (area **14**) lurk here. Zetch'r'r has assigned them to watch over the githzerai safehouse (area **6U**).

Githyanki Spies (4): hp 36 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Tactics: These spies work for Zetch'r'r and the Sha'sal Khou (see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" for details). If the safehouse is threatened, they use quickened *dimension doors* to transport to area **6S**, join forces with the githyanki stationed there, and use *dimension door* again to enter the safehouse and defend both the githzerai and the portal hidden in area **6V**.

6L. MUZARC'S APARTMENT

The door to this apartment is locked (Open Lock DC 30). The disheveled room beyond contains a bed, dresser, wardrobe, and a few dozen candlesticks holding half-melted candles. Muzarc the elf wizard (see area **6Q**) keeps his spell components in various dresser drawers, pouches, and tunics scattered about the room. Those searching the room for treasure find little of interest, as Muzarc carries his valuables on his person.

6M. VACANT APARTMENTS

Each of these apartments is empty.

6N. KELHESTRA'S APARTMENT

Kelhestra the merchant (see area **6O**) lives here. The door to her apartment is locked (Open Lock DC 25), and the interior is furnished with plush carpets, pillows, and other creature comforts. The apartment contains little of value.

6O. PLANAR MUSINGS

A silver-filled engraving resembling a dimensional sextant adorns the door to this shop. Hanging above the door, a darkwood sign proclaims "Planar Musings—Reflections on the Omniverse." The shop itself contains shelves of trinkets and oddities that the proprietor has collected in her explorations, including chimes, candles, inks, musical instruments, clocks, bones, and maps.

Creature: The proprietor, Kelhestra, is a half-elf bard. She is willing to sell a map of a particular outer plane for 100 gp, although she cannot guarantee its authenticity. For 50 gp, she will share stories and musings about a particular plane she has visited or heard stories about. Again, the veracity of the information is not guaranteed. If a PCs come to her with a specific planes-related question or present some planar oddity, Kelhestra can use her bardic knowledge ability or a *legend lore* spell to help them find the answers they seek.

Kelhestra, Female Half-elf Brd 10: hp 47; AL NG; use **Table 4–13: NPC Bard** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to generate statistics and equipment, if necessary. In addition to her normal gear, Kelhestra carries a key to her apartment (area **6N**).

6P. UPSTAIRS FOYER

This empty room has two doors leading to adjacent shops (Planar Musings and Muzarc's Scriptorium). A stone bench juts beneath a window peering down into a back alley.

6Q. MUZARC'S SCRIPTORIUM

An ornate scroll-shaped signs hanging by the door of this shop reads "Muzarc's Scriptorium." Inside the shop, an elf wizard named Muzarc hunches over a desk in the middle of the room. When customers enter, he raises his head, grins, and says, "Come seeking a scroll, have ye? Be my guest—look around! If ye can't find what ye need, I might have something tucked away on another plane that'll serve ye."

The walls are lined with wooden cubbyholes, some empty and others containing furled scrolls. Muzarc's claims to deal mostly in arcane scrolls, many of which he scribes himself (at the minimum level necessary to cast the spell). However, for a slightly inflated fee (10% more than the standard price), he can secure a divine scroll and deliver it within 1d4 days. Characters searching for a

particular arcane spell have a base 50% chance of finding one copy here, minus 10% per level of the spell. He does not carry (and cannot cast) spells higher than 4th level.

Creatures: Muzarc is an elf wizard who deals exclusively in scrolls (they are cheap and relatively ease to mass-produce). He has no interest in providing other sorts of services or information.

Muzarc, Male Elf Wiz 8: hp 30; AL N; use **Table 4–22: NPC Wizard** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to generate statistics and equipment, if necessary. In addition to his normal gear, Muzarc carries a key to his apartment (area **6L**).

6R. THE EARNEST EYE

The door to this shop is set into a carved stone frame with an architrave sculpted into the likeness of a dragon clutching a crystal orb. A githyanki tir'su burned into the door spells the word "Kir'yal." Under the symbol, a gold plaque reads (in Draconic) "The Earnest Eye—Finder of missing friends and lost souls." A soft female voice beckons all who knock to enter.

The Earnest Eye is a shop where customers pay for scrying magic. Its proprietor, an old githyanki hr'a'cknir named Kir'yal, charges 140 gp per *scrying* spell (one-fifth the price of a scroll of *scrying*) or 455 gp for a *greater scrying* spell (one-fifth the price of a scroll of *greater scrying*). She can cast five *scrying* and two *greater scrying* spells in a 24-hour period. She requires payment up front, regardless of whether the desired spell succeeds, and hastens to point out that her spells work better when she has a likeness, picture, possession, garment, or piece of the creature or individual being scried.

A stone, claw-shaped pedestal rising from the middle of the floor holds a font of silvery liquid that Kir'yal uses as a scrying pool. Although she can be fussy and cantankerous, Kir'yal is always polite to customers. Her one rule is that she does not scry on other githyanki, and she makes this clear to every customer. She does not accept bribes, and threatening her only works with a successful DC 24 Intimidate check. Kir'yal lives in a large manse in the Merchant District and spends long hours in meditation when not tending to customers.

Creature: Kir'yal is unlike most githyanki. She is not evil, and her willingness to live and work in the Merchant District has earned her some derision among her kind. Although she has not advanced far as a wizard, as a hr'a'cknir she has atypical psionic abilities. Kir'yal is attuned to the Astral Plane and understands its nature. She also has a keen insight into the earthquakes besetting Tu'narath and believes that someone in the city is trying to awaken the dead god on which Tu'narath is built. Fearing that some ancient foe of the githyanki might be responsible for the tremors, she has tried using magic to learn more—to no avail. Kir'yal does not suspect the Lich-Queen and would never endanger herself by scrying on Vlaakith.

Kir'yal the Hr'a'cknir: hp 21; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

6S. SHYNYSTAR'S SPELLWARDS

A sign carved to resemble a pair of crossed staves alludes to the purpose of this shop. A note tacked to the door reads "Apologies, but I am away visiting acquaintances elsewhere. For the second-finest abjurations in Tu'narath, see the Blue Merchant at the Morningstar Inn. Shynystar Goldstaff."

The store's proprietor, Shynystar, specializes in abjurations and sells items to protect planewalkers from the natural and magical hazards of particular planes. However, he recently left Tu'narath to visit friends in Sigil, and his shop has been empty (but not unoccupied—see **Creatures** below) for some time.

The shop contains an ebony counter, several empty storage cabinets, a finely spun red carpet, and a writing desk loaded with paper, ink, and writing quills. Hanging on the wall behind the counter is a mirror in a green copper frame shaped like a gaping devil's face. Perched atop the counter is a small stuffed winged snake. There is little else of interest here.

Creatures: Three githyanki soldiers, two gish, and one warlock from J'ryn'zalas (area **14**) lurk here, waiting for the spies in area **6K** to alert them to trouble. They use their quickened *dimension door* abilities to reach area **6U** when they realize the githzerai safehouse is threatened.

Githyanki Soldiers (3): hp 34 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Githyanki Gish (2): hp 24 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Githyanki Warlock: hp 27; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics. The githyanki warlock carries a key to area **6T**.

6T. GUARDED APARTMENT

Both doors to this room are locked (Open Lock DC 30). The room contains a table and four chairs.

Creatures: Four githyanki soldiers stand guard in this room, rushing into area **6U** at the first sign of trouble. All four githyanki are loyal to Zetch'r'r, a warlord allied with the Sha'sal Khou (see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" and area **14** for more information).

Githyanki Soldiers (4): hp 34 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

6U. GITHZERAI SAFEHOUSE

A sign made of petrified bark hangs on the door to this shop. Etched into the sign in clumsy letters are the words "Magic Elixirs" (in Common). However, the shop has been closed for some time, its doors locked tight (Open Lock DC 30).

Creature: Eximil, a githzerai monk in league with the Sha'sal Khou, meditates quietly in the middle of this abandoned shop. Although not welcome in Tu'narath, he periodically comes to the city to deliver important messages to Zetch'r'r, using the portal in area **6V** to enter and leave the githyanki warlord's stronghold (area **14**) unnoticed. He also delivers messages and "merchandise" (magic items and other resources obtained by Zetch'r'r) to githzerai agents hidden in secret redoubts throughout the Astral Plane, reaching these destinations with the aid of an astral ship called the Voidstinger (see area **8**).

Like all members of the Sha'sal Khou, Eximil longs for the day when the githyanki and githzerai are reunited as a single people (see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" for details). He gives his life to keep those who do not share his beliefs from using the portal in area **6V** to violate Zetch'r'r's stronghold.

Eximil: hp 72; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Treasure: In addition to his equipment, Eximil carries a *helm of telepathy*—a gift from Zetch'r'r (obtained during a githyanki incursion on the Material Plane) for another Sha'sal Khou member operating outside the githyanki capital city.

Development: Eximil is preparing to leave Tu'narath to deliver the *helm of telepathy*. He is waiting for crewmembers of the Voidstinger to arrive and escort him safely back to the astral ship (see area **8**).

6V. HIDDEN PORTAL

The secret door leading to this room requires a successful DC 20 Search check to locate. If the PCs explore the room, read or paraphrase the following:

> A 10-foot-diameter gaping portal fills this otherwise empty room. A swirling maelstrom of violet-black smoke fills the oval gate.

The gaping portal is a two-way portal leading to J'ryn'zalas, the stronghold of a githyanki warlord named Zetch'r'r. A githzerai sorcerer working for the Sha'sal Khou created the portal with Zetch'r'r's permission, allowing githzerai to enter and leave J'ryn'zalas without having to navigate the capital city. Any creature or object that enters the portal is instantly transported to area **14C**.

7. DOCKING TOWERS

Nongithyanki visitors approaching Tu'narath in astral ships are permitted to dock here and nowhere else.

Several docking towers jut from this "hand" of the dead god. A typical tower resembles a 100-foot-tall iron scaffold with a wooden platform or iron berth near the top designed to support the weight of an astral ship. An iron berth has adjustable support struts that conform to the shape of a ship's hull, securing it in place, whereas a platform is simply a flat area on which a flat-bottomed ship can set down. Within the docking tower's superstructure, a levitating wooden platform allows crews to lower themselves and their cargoes safely to the island's surface, at a speed of 50 feet per round, simply by uttering the word "Down" in Common. Speaking the word "Up" causes the platform to rise at the same speed. A primitive crane affixed to the top of the tower enables crews to hoist heavy cargo into and out of a ship's hold.

Since gravity is directional, approaching astral ships must constantly adjust their orientation so that the deific husk of the dead god is always beneath them as they prepare to dock.

Roll 1d4 to determine the number of astral ships docked here at any given time. Unless its crew has reason to leave Tu'narath, the astral ship Voidstinger is among the vessels present (see area **8** below).

8. THE VOIDSTINGER

Although the vast majority of astral ships belong to the githyanki, other powerful or intrepid beings may command such vessels. The Voidstinger is a typical astral ship, created using the Craft Astral Ship feat (see sidebar) and driven by the power of thought. It sports a pair of extendable wings and landing gear resembling the talons of a bird of prey. Although ships like this are common on the Astral Plane, the Voidstinger and its crew are somewhat irregular.

Commanding the ship is Talazander Krulkrex, the former cohort of a sorcerer who was recently slain in astral form by an astral dreadnought. Krulkrex doesn't know which astral dreadnought killed his master, so he intends to kill them all. Krulkrex and his crew have killed two dreadnoughts so far, trading the carcasses to the Blue Merchant (see area **5K**) for money to replace lost crewmembers and repair damage to the ship. Between hunts, Krulkrex makes small cargo deliveries for Belvelios as well.

On this particular visit to Tu'narath, Krulkrex is not transporting cargo: The half-orc is preparing for another excursion into the silver void, restocking his supply of ballista bolts and securing replacement weapons for his crew. Krulkrex also plans to transport a githzerai monk named Eximil (see area **6U**) safely to a hidden Sha'sal Khou stronghold far from Tu'narath. Krulkrez does not fully trust his crew, as many of them are recent replacements.

Hence, he takes great pains to conceal the identity of his passenger, claiming Eximil is a human wizard studying Astral Plane phenomena.

Creatures: Captain Talazander Krulkrex is an intimidating figure whose stern glare demands obedience and whose resolve commands respect. He and seven crewmembers remain aboard the astral ship at all times. Eight more crewmembers, one of which is a cleric of St. Cuthbert, fill out the crew. These eight members periodically head into the city to secure supplies. The crew is trained to follow Krulkrex's orders.

Captain Talazander Krulkrex, Male Half-orc Ftr 12: hp 94; use **Table 4–16: NPC Fighter** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to generate Talazander's statistics and equipment, if necessary.

Geward Beltriss, Male Human Clr 10 (St. Cuthbert): hp 68; use **Table 4–14: NPC Cleric** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to generate Geward's statistics and equipment, if necessary.

Voidstinger Crewmembers, Male and Female Human War 5 (14): hp 27 each. Each crewmember wears studded leather armor (DC 13) and carries a longsword (+6 melee, 1d8+1 damage) and heavy crossbow (+5 ranged, 1d10 damage).

Tactics: Krelkrex requires that his crew not draw undue attention to themselves through their actions or words. However, they defend themselves if attacked, fleeing if the nearby flying fortresses take notice and send githyanki to investigate.

The following keyed encounters refer to the map of the Voidstinger. Note that the astral ship generates an artificial gravity plane that allows the crew to move on its decks normally.

8A. BOW

The ballista mounted on the bow can pivot to fire off the ship's port and starboard sides. A crate of four *+1 ballista bolts* and four nonmagical ballista bolts rests nearby. One

ASTRAL SHIPS

Building an astral ship requires the Craft Astral Ship feat. Flying the ship requires the pilot (who must have an Intelligence score of 1 or higher) to sit in a specially attuned chair called a helm. The helm allows the pilot to propel the ship by thought at a speed (in feet) equal to 10 times the pilot's Intelligence score. When the ship passes within a gravity well, such as that generated by a large chunk of drifting matter, it slows to a default speed of 50 feet. The astral ship can move at double speed and running speed. Piloting the ship is always considered a full-round action, and the pilot cannot engage in other activities while controlling the ship.

A pilot seated in the helm receives a 360-degree mental picture of the area around the ship, out to normal visibility range. The pilot feels as if he or she is flying directly over the ship and able to look in all directions at once.

The helm radiates strong transmutation magic under the scrutiny of *detect magic*. It serves as a conduit between the pilot and the vessel and is rooted to the ship. Destroying any part of it (the chair itself or the parts connecting it to the rest of the ship) renders the vessel powerless and inert. A helm has the same hardness as the rest of the astral ship and 3 times its hardness in hit points.

Rarely sold on the open market, astral ships can find their way into someone's hands by theft or other means. Excluding custom models, astral ships generally share the following statistics:

Astral Ship: CR —; Colossal Construct; HD 8d10 +1d10 per 10 feet of length; Init as the pilot – 4; Spd as the pilot (+30 ft. with psychic sails) in the Astral Plane, fly 50 ft. (poor) in a gravity well; AC varies (–8 size, +1 natural per HD); Atk as cleric of level equal to the ship's HD; Space/Reach 30 ft./10 ft. (or as ram); SA ram, mounted weapons; SQ construct, hardness; AL N/A; SV as commoner of level equal to the ship's HD, with no ability modifiers.

Construct: Like most constructs, astral ships are immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, disease, and similar effects. They are not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Hardness: An astral ship is usually composed of different materials but has an overall hardness of 5 to 10. An astral ship composed mainly of wood might have hardness 5, while an astral ship made of iron would have hardness 10. See the Attack an Object section of the *Player's Handbook* for more information on hardness.

Mounted Weapons: An astral ship can be fitted with heavy catapults, light catapults, and ballistas (see Siege Engines in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for statistics). An astral ship can have one mounted weapon for every 2 HD it possesses, although nonmilitary astral ships typically forego a full array of weapons in favor of having cargo space. A heavy catapult counts as two weapons for the purpose of determining how many weapons an astral ship can carry.

Ram (Ex): In any round in which no ship-mounted weapons are fired, an astral ship can ram a Huge or larger creature or object. If the prow of the astral ship is more than 50 feet away in a straight line from a target, it can move up to double its speed to deliver a ram attack using its regular attack bonus. The ram deals either bludgeoning or piercing damage, depending on the shape of its prow. The damage dealt equals 1d10 per point of the astral ship's hardness. For example, an astral ship with hardness 10 deals 10d10 points of damage with a successful ram attack, or triple damage on a critical hit (threat range 20).

crewmember is needed to fire and reload the ballista; reloading it requires two full-round actions.

8B. BRIDGE (EL 8)

This room contains a pair of winches for folding and unfolding the ship's wing-shaped psychic sails. The wings are usually extended during flight and pulled in before landing. The wing sails are designed to catch psychic winds and increase the ship's speed during flight; without the wings fully extended, the ship's astral speed slows by 30 feet.

A wooden ladder descends through a hatch in the floor, granting access to the lower deck.

8C. HELM

> A large, lumpy chair composed of hardened resin and contoured to fit a humanlike form rests at the back of the room. Ropy tendrils of hardened resin sprout from the chair's back and merge seamlessly with the walls of the ship.

One can control the speed and direction of the Voidstinger by sitting in the chair (called the helm) and focusing one's thoughts on flying the astral ship. Once in the chair, the pilot can see in any direction as though floating directly above the vessel. A tingling sensation causes the pilot's body to tremble slightly as he or she controls the ship. See the "Astral Ships" sidebar for more information about the astral ship and its helm.

8D. GUEST CABIN

A hammock hangs between two wooden walls near the door. Other furnishing in this cabin include a desk and matching chair by the aft window, a dresser with four drawers, and some hanging tapestries depicting various other planes of existence. To one side of the bed rests a heavy wooden trunk secured with a good lock (Open Lock DC 30).

Creature: When Captain Krulkrex is ready to leave Tu'narath, he sends Geward Beltriss and three crewmembers to fetch Eximil (see **6u**) and escort the githzerai monk safely to this cabin. Eximil remains sequestered in the cabin for the duration of his journey, pretending to be a wizened human wizard.

Eximil: hp 72; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Treasure: In addition to his equipment, Eximil carries a *helm of telepathy*—a gift from the githyanki warlord Zetch'r'r (obtained during a githyanki incursion on the Material Plane) for another Sha'sal Khou member operating outside the githyanki capital city.

8E. AFT

The two ballistas mounted to the ship's aftcastle can pivot to fire off the ship's port and starboard sides respectively. A crate of four *+1 ballista bolts* and six nonmagical ballista bolts rests between them. One crewmember is needed to fire and reload a ballista; reloading it requires two full-round actions.

A pair of wooden doors covers a 10-foot-square hatch leading to the cargo hold (area **8F**). The doors are not locked but quite heavy, requiring a DC 12 Strength check to pull open.

8F. CARGO HOLD

The Voidstinger's hold contains a few empty crates but no cargo. A few storage nets hang from hooks along the walls, between the portholes.

8G. CREW CABIN

This cabin contains seven pairs of hammocks stacked like bunkbeds. Two unlocked footlockers rest under each pair of hammocks.

Treasure: Each footlocker holds some personal effects and a pouch containing 2d10 pp and 5d20 gp.

8H. FIRST MATE'S CABIN

This cabin contains a hammock, a desk and chair, a locked wooden chest (Open Lock DC 25), and a small table. Atop the table rests a shrine dedicated to St. Cuthbert. On one wall hangs a painted wooden symbol of St. Cuthbert set with gems.

Treasure: The wooden symbol of St. Cuthbert on the wall is set with three large red spinels (250 gp each) and eight smaller red spinels (100 gp each). A small clay bowl inside the shrine serves as a brazier and holds a block of incense of meditation.

8I. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

The captain's cabin contains a hammock, a four-drawer dresser, a locked iron strongbox (Open Lock DC 40), a large wooden desk and chair, and a table covered with maps. The contents of the iron strongbox are described under **Treasure**, below.

The dresser holds Krulkrex's clothes and worthless personal effects. The strongbox contains the **Treasure**. PCs searching the desk find pieces of paper, writing quills, and jars of ink, but little else of interest. The maps depict various "islands" and strongholds adrift in the Astral Plane, including the deific husk upon which Tu'narath is built. Various locations in Tu'narath (such as The Morningstar Inn and the lich-queen's palace of Susurrus) are labeled in Common.

Creature: Unless he is summoned elsewhere, Captain Krulkrex can be found here, resting in his hammock or poring over his collection of maps. If awakened by shouts of alarm, he does not take the time to don his half-plate armor before investigating the disturbance; otherwise, he appears fully armored.

Tactics: Unyielding and fatalistic, Krulkrex defends his ship and crew to the end.

Treasure: The locked iron strongbox contains 80 pp in a leather pouch and four *potions of cure moderate wounds.*

9. MILITARY DISTRICTS

The githyanki culture revolves around war and conquest. From the moment they hatch, githyanki are assigned to military regiments. Deprived of any sense of family, the githyanki learn to value their weapons, armor, and combat prowess above all else. The city has several military districts where hundreds of githyanki regiments live and train. Each regiment has its own hierarchy of githwarriors, knights, warlocks, and gish. A typical district contains dozens of separate military compounds, with a supreme commander (a githyanki knight) presiding over each one. As the supreme commanders spend most of their time planning missions of conquest and conferring with one another about issues affecting the whole city, they rely on captains (kith'raks) to organize the units under their command. The captains in turn rely on sergeants (sarths) to train the common soldiers. Githyanki who demonstrate an affinity for magic receive additional training at the Citadel of the War Magi (area **11**) before rejoining their respective regiments. Githyanki who manifest unusual psionic abilities are sent to the Citadel of the Mind's Eye (area **12**) for mental training and enlightenment.

Creatures: A typical military compound includes several fortified and heavily guarded buildings. A typical military regiment consists of 200 githwarriors, 100 githyanki soldiers, 20 gish, 10 sarths, three kith'raks, and a supreme commander (knight). Githyanki use red dragons to reinforce their garrisons, and most military compounds include one or more buildings specifically designed to house them. A typical military regiment includes six juvenile red dragons and an adult red dragon (which is usually quartered with the supreme commander).

Nongithyanki are not welcome in the Military District and are arrested or killed on sight.

10. ASTRAL SHIPYARDS

The githyanki build their astral warships inside massive stone hangars resembling warehouses. Each hangar has a roof composed of strips of leather stitched to a retractable

NEW FEAT: CRAFT ASTRAL SHIP [ITEM CREATION]

You can create an astral ship—a vehicular construct designed exclusively for travel on the Astral Plane.

Prerequisite: Spellcaster level 15+.

Benefit: Provided you have the material resources, you can build an astral ship that harnesses the power of thought to ply the Astral Plane. The cost of building an astral ship includes the cost of the hull as well as all the materials and spell components that are consumed or become a permanent part of it.

The first task is to construct a facility (either a spacious workroom or warehouse)—at a cost of 2,000 gp. The second task is building the astral ship's body or hull. You can assemble the hull or hire someone else to do the job, but the builder must have at least 10 ranks in the Craft (shipmaking) skill.

The real work of creating an astral ship involves extended magic rituals that require two months to complete. The rituals allow you to "grow" the ship's helm—an organic chair that attunes the ship to the thoughts of the pilot. You must labor for 8 hours each day in the facility where the ship is being built. The helm can be shaped and configured according to your whim. Once fully grown, it can propel the ship through the Astral Plane at a speed (in feet) equal to 10 times the pilot's Intelligence score. A helm must be attached to a specific astral ship and cannot be removed and used to control another vessel. (Removing the helm destroys it and renders the ship immobile.) However, any creature with an Intelligence score can use the helm once it is installed.

When not conducting the rituals, you must rest and can perform no other activities except sleeping, eating, and talking. If you miss a day of rituals, the process fails and must begin anew. Money spent is lost, but XPs spent are not. The astral ship's hull can be reused, as can the facility.

Hull Cost: An astral ship's size (primarily its length) and hardness both factor into the cost of its hull.

The hull costs 25 gp per foot of length. If the astral ship's width or depth is half of its length or less, no additional hull costs for size apply. A hull with a width or depth greater than half the ship's length costs 25 gp per foot of added width or depth. Multiply the cost by the ship's hardness (usually a number between 5 and 10) to get the final cost of the ship's hull. For instance, a 120-foot-long astral ship hull with hardness 8 would cost 24,000 gp ($120 \times 25 \times 8$).

Helm Cost: An astral ship's helm is double the cost of the ship's hull. To create a helm, one must spend 1/25 of the helm's price in XP.

Psychic Sails Cost: Sails designed to catch the psychic winds of the Astral Plane may be added to the ship at a cost equal to half the hull cost. Psychic sails increase an astral ship's speed by 30 feet.

wooden framework that opens when a newly commissioned warship is ready for launch. A typical facility can handle two warship hulks at the same time, although rarely are these ships at the same stage of completion. The githyanki shipwrights (called mlar) and warlocks who build the astral ships (called var'ith'n) reside in smaller buildings near the hangars.

Creatures: A githyanki blackweave warlock (see POLYHEDRON *Magazine* #159) loyal to the Lich-Queen oversees the construction of each astral ship. The blackweave warlock oversees four warlock apprentices, who in turn command a team of 20 mlar, each of whom is a 7th-level githyanki expert with 10 ranks in the Craft (shipbuilding) skill. A squad of githyanki guards the hangar and protects the warlocks; this squad consists of 20 githyanki soldiers, 2 sarths, 1 kith'rak, and 3 trained hanathka'duths (half-red dragon megaraptors).

- **Githyanki Soldiers (20):** hp 34 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.
- **Githyanki Sarths (2):** hp 51 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.
- **Githyanki Kith'rak:** hp 102; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.
- **Githyanki Warlocks (4):** hp 27 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.
- **Blackweave Warlock:** hp 99; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.
- **Hanathka'duths (3):** hp 168 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Nongithyanki are not allowed near the astral shipyards and are arrested or killed on sight.

11. KRAN'I'TOC: CITADEL OF THE WAR MAGI

A 40-foot-tall stone wall broken by 60-foot-tall guard towers encloses Kran'i'toc, the Citadel of the War Magi. The citadel itself is a sprawling edifice—a collection of warlocks' towers and lecture halls joined by great pillared halls and arcades. It rests atop a stony knoll, looming over a conglomeration of residences occupied by hundreds of instructors and pupils.

Githyanki who demonstrate exceptional mastery of magic are removed from their military regiments and enrolled in Kran'i'toc, where they study spells and craft magic items. Those who choose the path of the gish combine their magical studies with the martial arts. At the end of their training, these young githyanki leave the citadel and return to their respective military regiments as practicing warlocks or gish. A handful of them stay behind as instructors and crafters of magic items, including the fabled githyanki *silver swords*.

Creatures: The towers surrounding Kran'i'toc bristle with ballistas and light catapults. A squad of githyanki fighters staffs each tower; each squad consists of 20 soldiers, 2 sarths, 1 kith'rak, and a juvenile red dragon.

The citadel itself contains scores of githyanki warlocks and gish, as well a dozen or more juvenile red dragon "watchdogs." Iron golems, magically bound planar allies, and *symbol* spells protect the citadel against intrusion. Nongithyanki found within the walls of the citadel are hunted down and killed on sight.

Treasure: Forges and workrooms within the citadel might hold small caches of magic items, but the real treasures of Kran'i'toc lie in scry-proof vaults hidden behind secret doors throughout the citadel. Herein the faculty hides its collection of potions, scrolls, wands, and wondrous items. Feel free to flesh out this trove as needed.

12. K'RADYSTAR: CITADEL OF THE MIND'S EYE

K'radystar, the Citadel of the Mind's Eye, is where githyanki come to study and harness the energies of the Astral Plane. Githyanki who manifest abnormal psionic abilities are sent here by their leaders to become hr'a'cknir—spiritual masters of the silver void. To become a hr'a'cknir, a githyanki must manifest unusual psionic powers (that is, psionic spell-like abilities atypical of the species). Githyanki society treats hr'a'cknir with equal measures of reverence and trepidation, and a hr'a'cknir who chooses not to return to his or her military regiment is free to pursue a different path without judgment or punishment.

The citadel proper resembles nothing so much as a cluster of square towers and hollow, rectangular monoliths fused into one complete structure. Within its stone walls, elderly hr'a'cknir teach young upstarts how to capture and redirect astral energies with their minds, allowing them to hone their peculiar psionic abilities. Blocks of residences fan out from the citadel, and a 40-foot-tall stone wall broken by 60-foot-tall towers surrounds this district.

Creatures: Hr'a'cknir have statistics similar to githyanki warlocks and gish. However, they possess different (or additional) psionic abilities. For example, a hr'a'cknir might have *augury* instead of *dimension door,* allowing her to channel astral energies to predict the future in much the same fashion a cleric uses divine energy to cast the *augury* spell. Each hr'a'cknir's abilities are unique and not necessarily a reflection of level.

The towers surrounding K'radystar bristle with ballistas and light catapults. A squad of githyanki fighters occupies

each tower; each squad consists of 20 githyanki soldiers, 2 sarths, a kith'rak, and a juvenile red dragon.

13. THE WILL OF GITH

The Lich-Queen bestows the title of Commissar to a supreme commander (knight) of exceptional cruelty, loyalty, and martial prowess. The Commissar personifies the law in Tu'narath, for he carries the burden of destroying those who bring harm to its citizens and all who oppose the Lich-Queen's dictum. The Commissar's responsibilities include capturing and executing lawbreakers and overseeing the city watch.

Commissar Yev'dakai rules the city from a stronghold called The Will of Gith. Loyal servants of the Lich-Queen known as the Ch'r'ai inform Commissar Yev'dakai of Vlaakith's wishes and insure that he fulfills his duties. Mivim, the member of the Ch'r'ai, resides at The Will of Gith and counsels Yev'dakai. Mivim answers to Xam'kras, the leader of the Ch'r'ai, who dwells in the Lich-Queen's palace of Susurrus (see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved for details on Susurrus).

The following encounters refer to the map of The Will of Gith.

13A. STRONGHOLD ENTRANCE

The ground floor entrance to this forlorn structure is carved to resemble a dragon's gaping maw. Stone doors inside the fanged maw defy entry to the building.

Bas-reliefs depicting honored githyanki warriors decorate the walls of the 20-foot-high chamber beyond the entrance, and caryatids representing the legendary Gith stand on either side of the archway leading to area **13B**. *Continual flame* spells illuminate the chamber.

Murder holes in the ceiling allow guards in area **13E** to rain arrows upon intruders (see **Development**, below).

Creatures: Four male duthka'gith fighters—half-red dragon githyanki—guard this entrance chamber. Two flank the entrance, and two more flank the archway leading to area **13B**.

Duthka'gith Guards (4): hp 70 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Tactics: The duthka'gith guards rely on sheer brawn to overwhelm their opponents.

Development: A battle here brings reinforcements from area **13B**, which arrive after 1 round. It also triggers a hail of arrows from the guards in area **13E**, who monitor the chamber through murder holes in the ceiling; the murder holes afford them nine-tenths cover.

13B. HALL OF PUNISHMENT

Great pillars carved with sneering githyanki faces support the ceiling of this 20-foot-high chamber. Torches set into sconces along the outer walls illuminate five square pits in the floor. Crisscrossing iron bars jut from the walls of each pit, just below floor level, effectively sealing them. From the floor near each pit rise two iron capstans, while above each pit dangle four sets of chains ending in shackles.

Two lifeless yet animate humanoid corpses grip each capstan, but they are the least of the chamber's horrors. Five human prisoners in shredded clothes dangle above the pits, their wrists caught in the iron-wrought grip of the shackles. They tremble helplessly at whatever fate awaits them in the pits below.

Although Commissar Yev'dakai enjoys executing criminals, individuals arrested for minor infractions and individuals unworthy of the Commissar's attention are consigned here—as examples of what happens to those who challenge the laws of Tu'narath.

The torches along the outer walls are actually *continual flame* spells cast on iron sconces.

The 10-foot-square pits descend 5 feet before opening into the unlit cavern below (area **13L**). The crisscrossing iron bars that cover the mouths of the pits can be extended or retracted by turning the nearby iron capstans—a feat requiring a successful DC 15 Strength check. As many as four individuals can attempt to turn a capstan at the same time.

The masterwork shackles binding the prisoners can be opened with a knock spell or successful Open Lock check, or they can be smashed open.

Iron Shackles: 1/3 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 10; break DC 28; Open Lock DC 30.

Iron Chain: 1/2 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 15; break DC 30.

Creatures: Three chain devils (kytons) and a bone devil (osyluth) named Tersicryl torment prisoners condemned to painful death in this hall. The kytons command the chains that bind the prisoners and can increase the chains' length by as much as 15 feet, effectively dropping the prisoners into the pits (whereupon they are quickly devoured by the creatures in area **13L**). The osyluth interrogates the prisoners, as well as animates and controls the zombies that operate the capstans. All of these devils serve Commissar Yev'dakai and help to defend the stronghold.

Two githyanki or githzerai zombies operate each of the chamber's ten capstans. They remain at their posts until the osyluth commands them otherwise. All of the zombies are

animated githzerai and mind flayer corpses that pose little threat to high-level PCs.

Eight githyanki soldiers keep watch over the devils and their prisoners. They stand in the corners of the room and respond quickly to trouble in other areas of the stronghold.

The five prisoners are evil acolytes of Hextor who failed to protect a githyanki egg hatchery on the Material Plane. Near death, they have nothing left to do but contemplate their failure and their fate. If set free, they guard their identities as best they can until afforded a chance to escape with their lives.

Tersicryl (bone devil): hp 95; *Monster Manual* 52.

Chain Devils (kytons) (3): hp 52 each; *Monster Manual* 53.

Githyanki Soldiers (8): hp 34 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Gith Zombies (20): CR 1/2; Medium undead (extraplanar); HD 2d12+3; hp 16 each; Init +0; Spd 20 ft. (can't run; base 30 ft.); AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (2d6+3/19–20, greatsword) or +3 melee (1d6+2, slam); SQ darkvision 60 ft., DR 5/slashing, single actions only, undead type; AL NE; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 11, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Feats: Toughness.

Acolytes of Hextor, Male and Female Human Clr3 (Hextor) (5): hp 23 each; use **Table 4–14: NPC Cleric** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to generate statistics for these NPCs, if necessary. They have no armor, weapons, magic items, or other gear.

13C. TOWER, GROUND FLOOR

A broad, stone staircase ascends to area **13D** on the second floor, while a stone spiral staircase descends to area **13K** of the dungeon level. The walls of this room are adorned with murals depicting flights of red dragons with githyanki riders. Between the murals are torch sconces made of illithid skulls; a *continual flame* burns in each one.

13D. UPSTAIRS FOYER

Murals on the wall of this foyer depict githyanki knights wielding *silver swords,* decapitating mind flayers and hacking their headless bodies to pieces. Between the painted murals are torch sconces made of illithid skulls; a *continual flame* burns in each one.

13E. GUARD ROOM

This room is featureless save for three rows of murder holes in the floor. Barred windows allow the silvery light of the Astral Plane to illuminate the chamber.

Creatures: Four duthka'giths stand guard here. They have their bows drawn and gaze down through the murder holes into area **13A**.

Duthka'gith Guards (4): hp 70 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Tactics: If intruders make it this far without alerting the entire stronghold, one of the duthka'gith guards uses a quickened *dimension door* to retreat to area **13I**, warning the Commissar of the surprise attack. The remaining guards try to incinerate intruders with their breath weapons before drawing their greatswords and leaping into melee.

Development: Sounds of combat here bring reinforcements from areas **13F** and **13H**. The guards in the chamber below (area **13A**) also hear the disturbance and make their way upstairs via areas **13C** and **13D**.

13F. CONFERENCE ROOM

A circular symbol is painted on the floor of this chamber. The symbol is a githyanki tir'su (see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" adventure for details) that spells the name "Gith." Centered above the tir'su is a round marble table with legs carved to resemble red dragons.

13G. WARLOCKS' ROOM

This room belongs to a pair of githyanki warlocks named Ravadur and Kr'ahlos. Both are members of the Ch'r'ai (see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" for details). The chamber contains a pair of desks with matching chairs, a shelf laden with miscellaneous spell components, and a pair of arcane locked chests containing the **Treasure**.

Treasure: Ravadur's chest contains githyanki body wrappings, a red robe sewn with semiprecious stones (worth 1,450 gp), a golden dragon mask painted red and set with malachite horns (worth 3,600 gp), and the warlock's spellbook (which contains all of Ravadur's prepared spells plus 2d6 additional 1st- through 3rd-level wizard spells).

Kr'ahlos's chest contains githyanki body wrappings, a masterwork dagger in a bejeweled scabbard (worth 500 gp), a golden goblet with a coiled dragon-shaped stem and rubies in the dragon's eyes (worth 4,500 gp), a *potion of cure moderate wounds,* and the warlock's spellbook (which contains all of Kr'ahlos's prepared spells plus 2d6 additional 1st- through 3rd-level wizard spells).

13H. HALL OF FINAL JUDGMENT

Silvery light pours into this sparsely furnished chamber through four great windows along one wall. A painted statue stands bathed in the astral luminescence: an imperious, 8-foot-tall githyanki in ornate golden armor, her greatsword poised threateningly as if to impale a fallen foe, her face a mask of ruthless contempt. Bas-reliefs on the walls depict a legacy of slaughter and conquest, showing fierce githyanki knights waging war against the vile illithids in stalactite-ridden caverns. Lovingly sculpted alabaster benches line the walls beneath these scenes of violence.

The Commissar of Tu'narath, Yev'dakai, passes final judgment on criminals in this chamber, where the statue of Gith can bear witness to his verdicts and executions. Indeed, the scornful glare of Gith is often the last thing a criminal sees before death. When not hearing the plaintive cries of the guilty or conferring with his advisors, the Commissar typically meditates in his private chamber (area **13J**).

13I. MIVIM'S QUARTERS

A brass table with legs shaped like curling tentacles dominates the room, and atop it rests an alabaster game board with a set of small, exquisitely sculpted obsidian figurines. Spaced around the walls are a dozen small niches containing black candles that cast blue flames. Between the niches hang tapestries depicting epic githyanki battles against mind flayers, githzerai, astral dreadnoughts, and other creatures.

This room is usually occupied (see **Creatures**, below). The alabaster game board and obsidian figurines are components of a strategy game similar to chess; the game board, wardrobe, and candles are discussed under **Treasure**.

Creatures: Mivim, a member of the Ch'r'ai (second only to Xam'kras), is here with two subordinate members of the Ch'r'ai—the warlocks Ravadur and Kr'ahlos. Mivim wears black body wrappings and a mask of the skull, giving him a lichlike appearance (although he's very much alive). He also clutches a gray-black rod made of astral driftmetal (his *rod of astral vengeance*).

Mivim's loyalty to Xam'kras, the leader of the Ch'r'ai, is absolute, but Mivim also awaits the day when the Lich-Queen consumes Xam'kras's soul (as she is wont to do) and makes him leader of the "revered ones." Mivim knows that Vlaakith is responsible for the earthquakes rocking Tu'narath but would never think to stand between her and her destiny.

In addition to his Ch'r'ai subordinates, Mivim relies on a trio of erinyes devils for counsel. The erinyes typically assume the forms of attractive female githyanki dressed in breathtakingly elaborate body wrappings. The erinyes attempt to seduce interlopers using their potent charm ability. If that fails, they try to entangle foes with their ropes before engaging in melee combat. If one erinyes falls in battle, each of the surviving erinyes makes one attempt to gate 1d4 barbazu (35% chance of success). If two erinyes fall, the third uses *greater teleport* to flee the stronghold and bring reinforcements to The Will of Gith.

Mivim the Hr'a'cknir: hp 60; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Githyanki Warlocks (2): hp 27; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Erinyes (3): hp 85 each; *Monster Manual* 54.

Treasure: The alabaster game board and obsidian game pieces are worth 300 gp for the set.

The wardrobe contains some ceremonial body wrappings (bandages), a collection of ornately embroidered silk robes, a pair of ornamental gold bracers shaped like howling demon faces (560 gp), a shrunken githzerai head hanging from a hook by some twine, and several jars of miscellaneous spell components. A secret compartment in the back of the wardrobe holds Mivim's spellbook and requires a successful DC 30 Search check to locate. See Mivim's statistics in the "Denizens of Tu'narath" section for the contents of his spellbook.

The twelve black candles are actually *coldfire candles* (see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" for details).

Development: A battle here attracts the attention of Commissar Yev'dakai (area **13J**), who uses a quickened *dimension door* to appear suddenly in the room.

13J. COMMISSAR'S ROOM

Two vivid murals adorn the walls of this chamber. The first depicts a lone githyanki knight astride a red dragon challenging an enormous, serpentine creature with horns, a single large eye, and two gnarled limbs ending in pincer-like claws. The second portrays a band of githyanki knights slicing through the silver cords of four astrally projecting mind flayers.

An ornate trunk fashioned from pieces of wood and astral driftmetal stands against one wall. The trunk is locked (Open Lock DC 40), and Commissar Yev'dakai carries the only key. Beside the trunk stands an iron weapon rack. The weapon rack holds a private collection of weapons taken from criminals and foes Yev'dakai has slain over the years. See **Treasure**, below, for the contents of the trunk and the rack.

Creatures: If the PCs enter this chamber without raising the alarm, they see a Commissar Yev'dakai in ornate full plate armor battling and parrying imaginary foes with

his silver sword. The Commissar's mount and companion, a juvenile red dragon named Torment, sleeps with one eye open nearby.

Commissar Yev'dakai seeks absolute order in Tu'narath. His finely wrought conception would not lie beyond the realm of reason were it not for the "unwanted interlopers" in the Merchant District. He has a low tolerance for "lesser species" and rarely shows leniency toward them. Yev'dakai oversees the duthka'gith soldiers who guard The Will of Gith and patrol the city. When not hounding criminals and enforcing the law, he confers on occasion with the supreme commanders of the various military groups in Tu'narath and shares his military strategems. Yev'dakai devotes his life to serving his queen, and he feels that Vlaakith herself speaks to him through her favored agents, the Ch'r'ai.

Yev'dakai, Male Githyanki Ftr 15: hp 152; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Torment, Juvenile Red Dragon: hp 168; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Tactics: Yev'dakai prefers to face foes in melee combat, swearing to put an end to their miserable lives "in the name of Vlaakith." Torment knows that Yev'dakai enjoys one-on-one challenges and always chooses a different opponent than the one Yev'dakai is fighting. If reduced to 25 hit points or fewer, Yev'dakai uses *plane shift* to escape, taking Torment with him if the opportunity arises. He then drinks his *potion of cure moderate wounds*.

Treasure: Yev'dakai's iron trunk contains several items: some folded clothes and black bedsheets, a gold diadem set with three black sapphires (5,150 gp), a bronze helmet shaped like a dragon's head with rubies for eyes (2,400 gp), a platinum collar (625 gp), four gold bracelets shaped like coiled serpents (200 gp each), a gold medal shaped like the sign of Vlaakith (180 gp), a *potion of bull's strength*, and a *potion of tongues*. The iron rack holds a *+1 dragon bane dwarven urgrosh*, a *+1 keen greataxe*, a *+2 heavy flail*, a *+1/+1 quarterstaff*, a *+1 holy mace of thundering*, a *+1 flaming scythe*, three pieces of a broken greatsword (two blade shards and a hilt set with an amethyst worth 1,000 gp), and a *+1 spiked chain*.

13K. ROUGH-HEWN CAVE

A spiral staircase, its newel carved to resemble coiling serpents, dominates this roughly hewn cave, from which juts a smaller side cave. A 10-foot-square, iron-wrought gate with a dangling padlock bars entry to a much larger cave filled with monstrous snarls and heavy footfalls.

The spiral stairs ascend to area **13C**. The gate is sealed with a large iron padlock (see below for statistics). PCs peering through the gate see area **13L** beyond.

Iron Padlock: 2 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 60; break DC 30; Open Lock DC 30.

Creatures: Two duthka'giths guard the room and watch the creature in area **13L**. One guard carries the iron key to the gate's padlock. The guards do not take damage from the occasional jets of flame shot through the gate by the denizens of area **13L**.

Duthka'gith Guards (2): hp 70 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

13L. PYROHYDRA LAIR

Light filters into this rough-hewn cave through five 10-foot-square iron grates in the 20-foot-high ceiling. Crushed bones and tatters of cloth lie strewn upon the floor. Two pyrohydras pace about the cave, waiting impatiently for their next meal to drop from one of the openings in the ceiling (see area **13B**).

12-Headed Pyrohydras (2): CR 13; hp 135 each; SA breath weapon; *Monster Manual* 157.

Breath Weapon (Su): Each head breathes a jet of fire 20 feet long, 10 feet high, and 10 feet wide. All heads breathe once every 1d4 rounds. Each jet deals 3d6 points of fire damage per head (DC 21 Reflex save for half).

14. J'RYN'ZALAS

J'ryn'zalas is one of many military fortresses in the city of Tu'narath. The supreme commander of J'ryn'zalas, a githyanki blackguard named Zetch'r'r, believes that Vlaakith the Lich-Queen has lost the vision set forth by Gith and is sacrificing her own people to fulfill her own mad schemes. She devours the life essences of her strongest defenders. She breeds half-dragon githyanki in a foolish attempt to improve upon perfection. No longer are the githyanki feared throughout the planes. Conquest has been usurped by complacency. All of this troubles Zetch'r'r deeply; however, his rhetoric has done little to turn other supreme commanders against Vlaakith.

Zetch'r'r seeks to reignite the githyanki passion for conquest and imagines leading a bold new regime to victory over his most hated enemies, the mind flayers. He also seeks to reunite the githyanki and githzerai as one people under his august rulership, for only together can the gith annihilate their ancient nemesis. To this end, he has joined forced with the Sha'sal Khou, a faction of allied githyanki and githzerai, and takes strides to protect its members.

The bastion of J'ryn'zalas is a three-story edifice adorned with sneering gargoyles and glowering bas-reliefs that scream or yell loudly when an invisible creature comes within 20 feet of the walls. The noise automatically alerts the bastion's denizens

Creatures: Zetch'r'r, his red dragon advisor and steed Vrax, four githyanki knights (Zetch'r'r's elite guards), and 20 gish occupy the fortress proper. Encircling the bastion are six smaller buildings that serve as barracks and training halls for the bulk of Zetch'r'r's troops: 200 1st-level githwarriors and 100 4th-level githyanki soldiers. Leading these githyanki soldiers are 20 sarths and 2 kith'raks. Stabled nearby are five juvenile red dragons (one for the bastion's kith'rak and the remainder for Zetch'r'r's knights).

Only Vrax, Zetch'r'r's knights, and the gish know that Zetch'r'r is allied with the Sha'sal Khou. Most of the other githyanki of J'ryn'zalas would be appalled and disgraced to learn that their supreme commander is allied with a faction that includes and tolerates githzerai members.

Zetch'r'r: hp 137; see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" adventure for complete statistics.

Vrax, Very Old Red Dragon: hp 465; *Monster Manual* 77.

Githyanki Knights (4): hp 119 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Githyanki Kith'raks (2): hp 102; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Githyanki Sarths (20): hp 51 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Githyanki Gish (10): hp 24 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Githyanki Soldiers (100): hp 34 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Githwarriors (200): hp 8 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Juvenile Red Dragons (5): hp 168 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Development: PCs might come to J'ryn'zalas looking for an ally against the Lich-Queen, or they might be captured and dragged here by githyanki loyal to Zetch'r'r. Zetch'r'r seeks worthy allies. Canny PCs might try to form an alliance with him; in this case, treat the githyanki warlord's initial attitude as hostile, but allow good roleplaying and successful Diplomacy checks to temper or quell his paranoia and distrust. If the PCs fail to change the warlord's attitude, one of Zetch'r'r's allies in the Sha'sal Khou might persuade the warlord to side with the PCs; however, in this case, Zetch'r'r secretly vows to slay them once they have outlived their usefulness.

The following encounters refer to the Bastion of J'ryn'zalas map. Ceilings throughout the stronghold are 20 feet high. Halls and rooms are unlit unless otherwise noted, as most githyanki rely on their darkvision to move about.

14A. ENTRANCE FOYER

> Eight identical githyanki stand at attention in this room, forming two columns. Each warrior is clad in black full plate and has a red gem embedded in his right eye socket. A black raven perches on each warrior's right shoulder.

Eight life-sized statues of Zetch'r'r (and his fiendish raven familiar) decorate this entrance foyer. Each one is made of painted black marble and is startlingly lifelike.

Toppling a statue requires a successful DC 20 Strength check. A set of double doors leads to the courtyard of Zetch'r'r's stronghold.

A 10-foot-wide hole in the middle of the ceiling quickly narrows, forming a funnel, before opening up into the floor of area **14O**. The red dragon Vrax lairs in the chamber above and can breathe a cone of fire down into this room if it detects intruders. The fire fills the 30-foot-square chamber and does not deal appreciable damage to the statues.

14B. ARMORY

The walls of this chamber are lined with iron weapon racks. The racks hold a variety of melee weapons, including at least one masterwork version of every simple, martial, and exotic melee weapon listed in the *Player's Handbook*. Zetch'r'r's troops use these weapons during training sessions.

14C. PORTAL TO KYN'DL STREET

> A 10-foot-diameter gaping portal fills this magically lit but otherwise empty room. A swirling maelstrom of violet-black smoke fills the oval gate.

Continual flame spells illuminate this room. The gaping portal is a two-way portal leading to area **6V**, a secret room hidden behind a githzerai safehouse on Kyn'dl Street, in the Merchant District. Any creature or object that enters the portal is instantly transported to area **6V**.

Creatures: Two hellcats guard the portal, attacking anyone who enters the room without githyanki escort. They are invisible, although their faintly glowing outlines are visible in darkened areas. They obey Zetch'r'r and his knights, but no one else. Their horrible, catlike shrieks are loud enough to be heard throughout J'ryn'zalas.

Hellcats (2): hp 60 each; *Monster Manual* 54.

14D. CRUCIFIX HALL

Four pillars carved to resemble serpents support the vaulted ceiling of this hall, which is where Zetch'r'r metes out discipline and meets with his kith'raks and gish. Hanging from the ceiling by iron chains is a large X-shaped crucifix made of black wood, with iron shackles bolted to the arms of the "X." The crucifix weighs 300 pounds, hangs 8 feet above the floor, and is suspended in such a way that anyone shackled to it faces the floor. Carved into the floor directly under the hanging crucifix is a bowl-shaped indentation used to collect blood.

Disobedient githyanki soldiers are sometimes shackled to the crucifix and left there for days, forced to endure the heckling of their fellow soldiers. Zetch'r'r and his knights also use the crucifix to interrogate and torture prisoners, slowing bleeding them to death once they're finished.

14E. SHRINE

This chamber houses a modest shrine to Vlaakith the Lich-Queen. An altar positioned against the far wall has a black crystal statuette of Vlaakith resting atop it, and niches carved into the walls hold black candles (see **Treasure**, below).

Zetch'r'r has not visited the shrine in ages and has no love for his undead queen. However, all warlords in Tu'narath are required to maintain a shrine dedicated to Vlaakith.

Treasure: The niches hold twelve unlit *coldfire candles* (see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" adventure for a description).

14F. DUNGEON

A heavy portcullis fashioned from gray astral driftmetal blocks the entrance to this dungeon. The winch for the portcullis is located in the hallway outside and requires a successful DC 14 Strength check to operate. Using the winch to lift the portcullis is a full-round action, but the portcullis can be dropped as a standard action by removing a catch on the winch. Bending the portcullis bars or lifting the portcullis without using the winch requires a successful DC 36 Strength check. As many as four Medium creatures (two inside and two outside) can attempt to lift the portcullis at the same time.

The room is empty and surrounded on all sides by 1-foot-thick mortared stone walls.

Astral Driftmetal Portcullis: 1-1/2 in. thick bars; hardness 12; hp 45 (per bar); break or lift DC 36.

14G. GUARDED HALL

A stone spiral staircase curls up to area **14H**. This hall is adorned with war banners depicting the J'ryn'zalas crest (a black raven perched on a stylized illithid skull). Three long wooden tables flanked by matching benches fill out the hall.

Creatures: Five gish stand guard here unless led elsewhere by Zetch'r'r's knights or calls of alarm.

Githyanki Gish (5): hp 24 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

14H. SPIRAL STAIRS

A stone spiral staircase leads down to area **14G**. This room is otherwise empty.

14I. GUARDED HALL

A stone spiral staircase curls up to area **14P**. This hall is otherwise bereft of furnishings.

Creatures: Five gish stand guard here unless led elsewhere by Zetch'r'r's knights or calls of alarm.

Githyanki Gish (5): hp 24 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

14J. GUEST QUARTERS

Zetch'r'r has set aside this room for honored guests (all other "guests" are shown to area **14F**). The room contains comfortable furnishings—a table with four matching chairs, two plush sofas, and some ornate statuary atop 4-foot-high stone pedestals (mostly busts of githyanki champions or handsomely crafted statuettes of devils and red dragons).

Creatures: One of the room's devilish statuettes is, in fact, an imp with a *statue* spell cast on it. While transformed into a statue, it can see and hear everything that happens in the room. Zetch'r'r uses the imp to spy on his guests, waiting for them to leave before asking it what it saw or overheard.

Imp: hp 13; *Monster Manual* 56.

14K. BALCONY

A 4-foot-tall stone parapet encloses each of these balconies overlooking the rest of the compound as well as the surrounding cityscape. A fall from a second-story balcony deals 2d6 points of damage, while a fall from the third-story balcony deals 4d6 points of damage.

14L. PRIVATE MEETING ROOM

This vaulted, circular chamber is illuminated by continual flame spells and has a tile mosaic on the floor depicting a fearsome red dragon. War banners hanging on the gray slate walls add to the décor. A well-hidden secret door (Search DC 25) leads to area **14N**.

The chamber is soundproof and has a *permanent Mordenkainen's private sanctum* spell cast on it. Zetch'r'r uses this room to confer in private with Vrax and his knights, as well as for secret meetings with high-ranking members of the Sha'sal Khou.

Development: Any meeting arranged between Zetch'r'r and the PCs occurs in this room. Vrax is also present for such meetings, usually in the *polymorphed* form of a human wizard.

14M. KNIGHTS' QUARTERS

Zetch'r'r's four trusted knights—Glyrr, I'a'kas, Lython, and V'kad—congregate here when not attending their warlord or leading excursions to other planes. Arranged in a semicircle facing the doors to area **14N** are four darkwood chairs, their high backs and armrests carved to resemble great black, bipedal ravens. More plush furnishings are arrayed in a corner nook overlooking the adjoining balcony (area **14K**).

Weapons of various sizes adorn the chamber's walls. Although practical, the weapons aren't of special quality and merely add to the décor.

14N. ZETCH'R'R'S QUARTERS

Zetch'r'r's room contains few furnishings, as the blackguard has little need for creature comforts. A five-sided table fills in the middle of the room near a 6-foot-tall, T-shaped iron stand used by Eyebite, the warlord's fiendish raven, as a perch. An imperious chair, made of vrock hide stretched over a sturdy wooden frame, faces the windows. War banners and tapestries hang from the walls; a banner depicting the J'ryn'zalas crest (a raven perched on a stylized illithid skull) conceals a secret door that leads to area **14L**. Locating the secret door requires a successful DC 25 Search check.

On either side of Zetch'r'r's demonic chair sits a locked and trapped iron trunk, which weighs 200 pounds when empty. Each lock can be picked with a successful DC 40 Open Lock check, and the traps are described under **Trap**, below. The contents of the trunks are described under **Treasure**.

Trap: A psychic poison strikes any creature other than Zetch'r'r or Vrax that touches either chest. Casting a *detect magic* spell reveals a moderate abjuration aura on each chest which can be *dispelled*, effectively removing the psychic poison. The poison traps have a caster level of 10th.

Psychic Poison Traps (2): CR 4; touch trigger (attached); no reset; psychic poison (nishita, DC 17 Will save resists, 1d6 Int/1d6 Int); Search DC —; Disable Device DC —.

Treasure: The treasure is contained in the two locked iron trunks and belongs to Zetch'r'r and Vrax.

Trunk #1 contains a bed of 28,500 gp, upon which rest the following items: an eye agate (5 gp), 3 rock crystals (30 gp each), 7 ambers (50 gp each), 2 chrysoberyls (110 gp each), 2 red garnets (130 gp each), a steel helm set with two matched moonstones (110 gp), a gold chain with an amber pendant (150 gp), a gold bracelet set with amber (200 gp), a pair of mithral-toed wyvernskin boots (400 gp), 2 silver armbands (600 gp each), a bronze basilisk statuette (800 gp), a bloodstone-studded rod (1,500 gp), an adamantine gauntlet set with rubies (1,700 gp), 3 leather-bound tomes describing the Nine Hells in excruciating detail (2,000 gp each), a *potion of cure serious wounds*, a *figurine of wondrous power* (*obsidian steed*), a *periapt of health*, and an arcane scroll (*cloudkill*, *greater teleport*, maximized *lightning bolt*, and *horrid wilting*).

Trunk #2 contains a bed of 24,200 gp, upon which rest the following items: 2 glass cubes each carved with the image of a githyanki's face (130 gp each), an amethyst bookend shaped like a mind flayer's head (300 gp), a black velvet cape fringed with giant eagle feathers (1,600 gp), a gold-plated hand mirror engraved with nymphs (1,800 gp), two ceremonial gold-plated breastplates set with tiny emeralds (2,500 gp each), a platinum neckband chased with entwined dragons with opalescent blue crystal beads for eyes (3,000 gp), a set of four religious treatises (4,000 gp for the set, which grants a +4 circumstance bonus on Knowledge [religion] checks), a *+1 animated light steel shield*, a *potion of bear's endurance*, a *wand of knock* (21 charges), a *ring of wizardry II*, a divine scroll (*find the path, harm*, and *transmute metal to wood*), and a *helm of opposite alignment*.

14O. CHEZ VRAX

Vraxanault, Zetch'r'r's red dragon ally and steed, claims this room. The chamber is just large enough to accommodate the dragon in his true form. Consequently, it holds no furnishings. A few cast-off scales litter the floor, however. The dragon keeps his treasure in Zetch'r'r's room (area **14N**).

A 5-foot-wide hole in the floor quickly widens, like a funnel, before opening up into the ceiling of area **14A**. Vrax can spy on the chamber below and use the hole in the floor to fill the chamber below with his fiery breath.

14P. SPIRAL STAIRS

A stone spiral staircase leads down to area **14I**. This room is otherwise empty.

14Q. WAR ROOM

This room has windows overlooking the rest of Zetch'r'r's military compound as well as the city of Tu'narath. In the middle of the room floats a 17-foot-long illusory projection (caster level 12th) of the dead god, the city built atop it, and the flying fortresses surrounding it. Zetch'r'r uses the projection to plan training exercises on the underside of the deific husk as well as organize his defenses in the unlikely event Tu'narath is attacked or the slightly more likely event that one of his fellow warlords turns against him.

15. NAVAL DOCKING TOWERS

The "crown" of the dead god has seven spokes that radiate outward from the lich-queen's palace (area **19**) and the necropolis surrounding it (area **17**). Several docking towers jut from each spoke, each one designed to support a githyanki astral ship. Githyanki stationed in nearby guard towers (area **16**) oversee the docking towers and watch for nongithyanki interlopers.

A typical tower resembles a 100-foot-tall iron scaffold with a wooden platform or iron berth near the top designed to support the weight of an astral ship. An iron berth has adjustable support struts that conform to the shape of a ship's hull, securing it in place, whereas a platform is simply a flat area on which a flat-bottomed ship can set down. Within the docking tower's superstructure, a levitating wooden platform allows crews to lower themselves and their cargoes safely to the island's surface, at a speed of 50 feet per round, simply by uttering the word "Down" in Githyanki. Speaking the word "Up" causes the platform to rise at the same speed. A primitive crane affixed to the top of the tower enables crews to hoist heavy cargo into and out of a ship's hold.

Since gravity is directional, approaching astral ships must constantly adjust their orientation so that the deific husk of the dead god is always beneath them as they prepare to dock.

At any given time, there are 1d3–1 githyanki astral ships docked at each of the dead god's seven spokes.

Development: Detailed descriptions and deckplans for various githyanki astral ships appear in *Dragon Magazine* #309.

16. GUARD TOWERS

Rising up from the spokes that form the dead god's "crown" are seven identical guard towers, each one four stories tall. Each tower is tapering cylinder of dark gray stone, with protruding balconies (used by landing or perching dragons) and four ornate silver horns jutting from the domed rooftop. The githyanki stationed in these towers protect the naval docks against attack.

Creatures: A githyanki kith'rak commands each tower, and the garrison consists of two sarths, 10 gish, and 20 githyanki soldiers. A juvenile red dragon serves as the kith'rak's steed.

In addition to their melee weapons, all githyanki stationed here carry composite longbows (each with a Strength bonus matching the wielder's) and quivers of 50 arrows.

Githyanki Kith'rak: hp 102; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics. The kith'rak also carries a composite longbow and 50 *+1 flaming arrows*.

Githyanki Sarths (2): hp 51 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics. Each sarth also carries a composite longbow and 50 *+1 arrows*.

Githyanki Gish (10): hp 24 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics. Each gish also carries a composite longbow and 50 arrows.

Githyanki Soldiers (20): hp 34 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics. Each soldier also carries a composite longbow and 50 arrows.

Juvenile Red Dragon: hp 168; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

The following encounter areas are keyed to the map of the Guard Tower. The ceilings within each tower are 20 feet high.

16A. ENTRANCE HALL

This spacious hall is empty. However, several arrow slits perforate the surrounding walls. Beyond the arrow slits lies a secret passage where githyanki soldiers and gish armed with bows and ranged attack spells can stand to attack intruders in this hall. The arrow slits provide the githyanki defenders with a improved cover (+8 cover bonus to AC and a +4 cover bonus on Reflex saves).

16B. ARROW SLITS

Three of the tower's four levels are lined with arrow slits, allowing githyanki soldiers and gish to rain arrows and spells upon attackers outside the tower. These empty areas contain the bulk of the tower's garrison.

16C. DRAGON PERCH

This balcony is used as a perch by visiting dragons. Most of the time, it is unoccupied. No railing or parapet encloses the balcony, and any creature that falls from this height takes 4d6 points of damage from the fall.

16D. HALL OF GITH

Two life-sized stone statues of Gith, liberator of the githyanki people, stand in alcoves that flank the doors leading to area **16E**. This hall is otherwise empty.

16E. KITH'RAK'S QUARTERS

The tower's captain, or kith'rak, can be found here when not defending the tower or the nearby naval docks against attack. As the chamber is unlit, githyanki must rely on darkvision to see. The room's furnishings include a modest desk with matching chair, a 9-foot-long triangular stone table with a tir'su (a circular sign spelling the word "Gith") carved into it, and a weapon rack lined with twelve masterwork greatswords and twelve masterwork javelins. Hanging on the far wall is a tapestry depicting Vlaakith the Lich-Queen, glowering from atop a throne made of illithid skulls and bones.

16F. BALCONY

A 4-foot-high stone parapet encloses this diamond-shaped balcony overlooking the naval docks. Two life-sized stone statues of Gith, the legendary githyanki champion, flank the entrance into the tower. Any creature that falls from the balcony takes 6d6 points of damage from the fall.

Creatures: When it is not patrolling the naval docks with its kith'rak rider, the juvenile red dragon lairs here. If it spots nongithyanki interlopers anywhere near the guard tower or nearby docking towers, it bellows loud enough to alert the githyanki in the guard tower, as well as any githyanki stationed aboard the astral ships docked nearby.

16G. DOME

This dome-shaped room, used as a gathering hall by the tower garrison, fills the entire fourth floor. A colorful painted mural covers the walls and roof, depicting an epic scene. The scene varies from tower to tower:

- A massive githyanki incursion on the Material Plane, showing red dragons with githyanki riders razing human cities and devouring its hapless denizens.
- The liberation of the githyanki people, showing githyanki warriors breaking free of their shackles and assaulting their mind flayer overlords.
- Githyanki knights armed with *silver swords*, storming a githzerai monastery on Limbo and using their swords to decapitate terrified githzerai monks.
- The formation of the githyanki pact with red dragons, showing Gith meeting with the great red dragon Ephelomon in Hell and the forging of the *scepter of Ephelomon*, a symbol of the eternal alliance. (See "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" for more information on the *scepter of Ephelomon*.)
- Githyanki knights laying claim to the Astral Plane by battling a dozen astral dreadnoughts.
- Githyanki and their dragon mounts sweeping across the deserts of Pharagos, a world on the Material Plane, flying through a magical maelstrom and slaying celestial guardians waiting on the other side.
- A coven of blackweave warlocks (powerful githyanki necromancers) raising an undead army comprised of illithids and their thralls, then sending the army toward a mind flayer fortress in the Underdark.

17. NECROPOLIS

Sinister, hulking mausoleums flank the Lich-Queen's palace on two sides, forming a vast necropolis. Within these ancient tombs lie the perfectly preserved mummies of ancient githyanki warriors and warlocks. Their ageless corpses are wrapped in funereal bandages and sealed in stone sarcophagi. Few precious belongings are interred

with them, for githyanki of that era bequeathed their weapons and other precious belongings to their most loyal subordinates and apprentices so the war against mind flayer tyranny could continue.

Creatures: Githyanki patrol the silent avenues of the necropolis. A patrol usually consists of ten githyanki soldiers and a sarth. In addition, a pair of githyanki warlocks astride hanathka'duths circle the necropolis at all hours, looking for signs of trouble from above. Anyone caught violating a tomb or desecrating the ancient dead is captured and put to death immediately.

Githyanki Soldiers (10): hp 34 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Githyanki Sarth: hp 51; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Githyanki Warlocks (2): hp 27 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Hanathka'duths (2): hp 168 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

18. DRAGON CAVES

The urban sprawl of Tu'narath covers less than half of the total surface area of the dead god's upper side. Beyond the city, the deific husk transforms into rocky hills and valleys carved with dozens of red dragon lairs (and even more caves dot the surface of the dead god's underside). These cave networks extend for hundreds of feet, joined together by tunnels that wend their way through the dead god like hollow arteries.

Creatures: The dead god plays host to scores of red dragons, all of whom revel in the fact that they do not age on the Astral Plane. The dragons revere Tiamat and honor the pact between her and the githyanki, serving the puny humanoids as mounts. The older dragons tend to live alone, while the younger ones congregate in small groups. If the PCs choose to explore one of the dragon caves, roll 1d6 to determine what lairs within: A roll of 1–2 indicates 2d4 juvenile red dragons, a roll of 3–4 indicates 1d2 adult red dragons and 1d4 juvenile red dragons, and a roll of 5–6 indicates a very old red dragon. Since time does not pass on the Astral Plane, the caves do not contain dragon eggs or wyrmlings.

Juvenile Red Dragon: hp 168; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Adult Red Dragon: hp 253; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Very Old Red Dragon: hp 449; *Monster Manual* 77.

Treasure: The githyanki appease their dragon allies with treasure acquired during incursions into the Material Plane. Red dragons have triple standard treasure; to create an appropriately sized hoard, see **Treasure** on pages 51–56 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. The *Draconomicon*, releasing at the end of 2003, also includes several pre-built dragon hoards.

19. SUSURRUS: THE PALACE OF WHISPERS

The Lich-Queen's palace is described in "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" in *Dungeon* #100.

DENIZENS OF TU'NARATH

This section provides statistics for various creatures and NPCs encountered in Tu'narath. Generic githyanki statistics are presented first, followed by creature statistics for various githyanki mounts, and finally statistics for various "name" NPCs described in this Web enhancement.

GITHYANKI STATISTICS

Use the following statistics for githyanki encounters in Tu'narath.

Githwarrior, Githyanki Ftr 1: CR 2; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 1d10+3; hp 8; Init +2; Spd 20 ft. (base 30 ft.), fly 100 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (2d6+3/19–20, masterwork greatsword); SA *psionics*; SQ darkvision 60 ft., *psionics*, SR 6; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Craft (weaponsmithing) +2, Intimidate +1, Spot +2. *Feats:* Dodge, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*daze* (DC 9) and *mage hand*. Caster level 1st; save DC 9 + spell level.

Possessions: Breastplate, masterwork greatsword.

Githyanki Soldier, Githyanki Ftr 4: CR 5; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 4d10+3; hp 34; Init +2; Spd 20 ft. (base 30 ft.), fly 100 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +4; Grp +7; Atk/Full Atk +9 melee (2d6+7/19–20, *+1 greatsword*); SA *psionics*; SQ darkvision 60 ft., *psionics*, SR 9; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Craft +2, Intimidate +4, Spot +3. *Feats:* Dodge, Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur*, *daze* (DC 9), and *mage hand*. Caster level 4th; save DC 9 + spell level.

Possessions: +1 breastplate, +1 greatsword.

Githyanki Gish, Githyanki Ftr 2/Sor 2: CR 5; Medium Humanoid (extraplanar); HD 2d10+4 plus 2d4+4; hp 24; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 80 ft. (perfect) on the Astral

Plane; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Atk/Full Atk +7 melee (2d6+3/19–20, masterwork greatsword); SA *psionics*, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., *psionics*, SR 9; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 16.

Skills: Climb +4, Concentration +4, Jump +5. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Dodge, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 13), and *mage hand*. Caster level 4th; save DC 13 + spell level.

Spells Known (6/5; save DC 13 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, flare, read magic, resistance, touch of fatigue;* 1st—*magic missile, shield.*

Possessions: +1 mithral shirt, Masterwork greatsword, *wand of mage armor* (5d10 charges).

Githyanki Sarth, Githyanki Ftr 6: CR 7; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 6d10+18; hp 51; Init +0; Spd 20 ft. (base 30 ft.), fly 130 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +6; Grp +9; Atk +11 melee (2d6+7/19–20, *+1 greatsword*); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (2d6+7/19–20, *+1 greatsword*); SA *psionics;* SQ darkvision 60 ft., *psionics*, SR 11; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills: Craft (weaponsmithing) +10, Intimidate +10, Ride +1, Spot +4. *Feats:* Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Leadership, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 11), *dimension door* (DC 15), and *mage hand*. Caster level 6th; save DC 11 + spell level.

Possessions: +1 full plate, +1 greatsword.

Githyanki Kith'rak, Githyanki Ftr 12: CR 13; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 12d10+36; hp 102; Init +2; Spd 20 ft. (base 30 ft.), fly 100 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +12; Grp +17; Atk +20 melee (1d8+12/19–20 plus 1d6 fire or electricity, *+1 flaming/+1 shock two-bladed sword*); Full Atk +20/+15/+10 melee (1d8+12/19–20 plus 1d6 fire or electricity, *+1 flaming/+1 shock two-bladed sword*) or +18/+18/+13/+8 melee (1d8+10/19–20 plus 1d6 fire or electricity, *+1 flaming/+1 shock two-bladed sword*); SA *psionics;* SQ darkvision 60 ft., *psionics*, SR 17; AL LE; SV Fort +11, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 20, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Jump +14, Ride +17, Tumble –2. *Feats:* Cleave, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (two-bladed sword), Great Cleave, Greater Weapon Focus (two-bladed sword), Greater Weapon Specialization (two-bladed sword), Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (two-bladed sword), Weapon Specialization (two-bladed sword).

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 10), *dimension door* (DC 14), *mage hand, telekinesis* (DC 15); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 17). Caster level 12th; save DC 10 + spell level.

Possessions: +2 full plate, +1 flaming/+1 shock two-bladed sword, +2 gauntlets of ogre power.

Githyanki Warlock, Githyanki Nec 6: CR 7; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 6d4+12; hp 27; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., fly 160 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +3; Grp +2; Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (1d4–1/19–20, masterwork dagger); SA *psionics*, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., *psionics*, SR 11; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 8, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Concentration +11, Decipher Script +6, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (the planes) +12, Spellcraft +14. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Still Spell.

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 11), *dimension door* (DC 15), *mage hand*. Caster level 6th; save DC 10 + spell level.

Spells Prepared (5/5/5/4; save DC 13 + spell level): 0—*acid splash, detect magic, flare, read magic, touch of fatigue;* 1st—*expeditious retreat, mage armor, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield;* 2nd—*darkness, false life, scare, scorching ray, see invisibility;* 3rd—*dispel magic, haste, lightning bolt, ray of exhaustion.*

Spellbook: 0—all; 1st—*burning hands, cause fear, chill touch, expeditious retreat, mage armor, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield, true strike;* 2nd—*blur, darkness, false life, gust of wind, invisibility, scare, scorching ray, see invisibility, shatter;* 3rd—*dispel magic, haste, lightning bolt, magic circle against good, protection from energy, ray of exhaustion, vampiric touch.*

Possessions: Masterwork dagger, *pearl of power* (*1st-level spell*), *ring of protection +1,* spellbook.

Githyanki Knight, Githyanki Ftr 7/Blk 7: CR 15; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 14d10+42; hp 119; Init +0; Spd 20 ft. (base 30 ft.), fly 100 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +14; Grp +17; Atk +19 melee (2d6+7/19–20 plus 2d6 unholy, *+1 unholy silver sword*); Full Atk +19/+14/+9 melee (2d6+7/19–20 plus 2d6 unholy, *+1 unholy silver sword*); SA command undead 5/day, poison use, *psionics,* smite good 2/day, sneak attack +2d6; SQ aura of despair, dark blessing, darkvision 60 ft., *detect good, psionics,* SR 19; AL NE; SV Fort +15, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 15.

Skills: Concentration +10, Hide +0, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (the planes) +2, Ride +4. *Feats:* Cleave, Improved Sunder, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*silver sword*), Leadership, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-By Attack, Weapon Focus (*silver sword*), Weapon Specialization (*silver sword*).

Aura of Despair (Su): Enemies within 10 feet suffer a –2 morale penalty on all saving throws.

Command Undead (Su): Rebuke or command undead as a 5th-level evil cleric.

Dark Blessing (Su): The blackguard adds his Charisma modifier as a bonus on all saving throws.

***Detect Good* (Sp):** The blackguard can detect good, as the spell, at will.

Poison Use (Ex): Can use poison with no risk of poisoning self.

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 12), *dimension door* (DC 16), *mage hand, telekinesis* (DC 17); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 19). Caster level 14th; save DC 12 + spell level.

Smite Good (Su): Twice a day, the blackguard may attempt to smite good with one normal melee attack. He adds +2 to his attack roll and deals 7 extra points of damage. If the blackguard accidentally smites a creature that is not good, the smite has no effect but it is still used up for that day.

Possessions: +1 unholy silver sword, +3 full plate, ring of protection +1.

Blackweave Warlock, Githyanki Sor 6/Blackweave Warlock 10: CR 17; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 16d4+48; hp 99; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., fly 100 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +10; Grp +9; Atk +10 melee touch (2 negative levels, touch); Full Atk +10/+5 melee touch (2 negative levels, touch) or +13 ranged touch (by spell, ranged touch spell); SA death touch, energy drain, *psionics*, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., death ward, *psionics*, SR 21; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +12; Str 8, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 20.

Skills: Concentration +13, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Spellcraft +11. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Craft Astral Ship, Empower Spell, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (necromancy), Weapon Focus (touch).

Death Touch (Su): With a successful melee touch attack, rolls 20d6; if the total at least equals the target's current hit points, it dies. This is a death effect.

Death Ward (Su): Immune to negative energy and death attacks, as if constantly protected by a *death ward* spell.

Energy Drain (Su): Touch bestows 2 negative levels. The Fortitude save to remove the negative levels has a DC of 25.

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 15), *dimension door* (DC 19), *mage hand, telekinesis* (DC 20); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 22). Caster level 16th; save DC 15 + spell level.

Spells Known (6/11/9/9/8/6/2; base DC 15 + spell level, or 17 + spell level for Necromancy): 0—*acid splash, detect magic, detect poison, disrupt undead, ghost sound, mage hand, touch of fatigue;* 1st—*chill touch, disguise self, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, true strike;* 2nd—*blindness/deafness, false life, scorching ray, see invisibility, spectral hand;* 3rd—*haste, lightning bolt, ray of exhaustion, vampiric touch;* 4th—*bestow curse, contagion, enervation, fear;* 5th—*blight, cone of cold, hold monster, waves of fatigue;* 6th—*circle of death, eyebite.* Caster level for Necromancy spells is 18th, for other spells is 16th.

Possessions: Staff of necromancy, ring of protection +2, cloak of Charisma +2.

Duthka'gith Guard, Githyanki Duthka'gith Ftr 8 (9): CR 12; Medium Dragon (augmented humanoid, fire); HD 8d12+16; hp 93, 90, 82, 79, 75, 75, 70, 65, 62; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., fly 110 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +8/+3; Grp +13; Atk +15 melee (2d6+10/17–20, *+1 greatsword*) or +15 melee (1d6+5, bite) or +10 ranged (1d8+6/×3, *+1 composite longbow* [+5 Str]); Full Atk +15/+10 melee (2d6+10/17–20, *+1 greatsword*) and +11 melee (1d6+2, bite) or +13 melee (1d6+5, bite) and +11 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws) or +10/+5 ranged (1d8+6/×3, *+1 composite longbow* [+5 Str]); SA breath weapon (6d8 cone of fire; DC 12 Reflex half), *psionics*, smite good 1/day (+8 damage); SQ darkvision 60 ft., cold resistance 5, fire immunity, *psionics;* SR 13; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 20, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 12.

Skills: Craft (armorsmithing) +4, Craft (weaponsmithing) +4, Jump +9, Listen +4, Ride +5, Search +3, Spot +4. *Feats:* Alertness, Improved Critical (greatsword), Iron Will, Multiattack, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 11), *dimension door* (DC 15), *mage hand, telekinesis* (DC 16). Caster level 8th; save DC 11 + spell level.

Possessions: +1 driftmetal breastplate (see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" in DUNGEON #100), *+1 greatsword, +1 composite longbow* (+5 Str), with 50 arrows, *potion of bull's strength, potion of bear's endurance, potion of haste.*

MOUNT STATISTICS

Use the following statistics for githyanki mounts.

Hanathka'duth, Half-red Dragon/Half-megaraptor: CR 8; Huge dragon (augmented animal); HD 8d10+51; hp 95; Init +2; Spd 60 ft., fly 120 ft. (average), fly 40 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 20 (–2 size, +2 Dex, +10 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +8; Grp +25; Atk +13 melee (2d8+9, talons); Full Atk +13 melee (2d8+9, talons) and +8 melee (1d4+4, 2 fore claws) and +8 melee (2d6+4, bite); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA breath weapon (6d8 cone of fire; DC 20 Reflex half); SQ darkvision 60 ft., immunities (fire, paralysis, sleep), low-light vision, scent; AL CE; SV Fort +12, Ref +8, Will +4; Str 29, Dex 15, Con 23, Int 4, Wis 15, Cha 12.

Skills: Hide +11, Jump +23, Listen +16, Spot +16, Survival +16. *Feats:* Run, Toughness, Track.

Juvenile Red Dragon: CR 10; Large dragon (fire); HD 16d12+64; hp 168; Init +0; Spd 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor), fly 140 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 24, touch 9, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +16; Grp +29; Atk +24 melee (2d6+9, bite); Full Atk +24 melee (2d6+9, bite) and +19 melee (1d8+4, 2 claws) and +19 melee (1d6+4, 2 wings) and +19 melee (1d8+13, tail slap); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA breath weapon, *locate object,* spells; SQ blindsense, immunities, keen senses, scent; AL CE; SV Fort +14, Ref +10, Will +12; Str 29, Dex 10, Con 19, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Skills: Concentration +23, Diplomacy +23, Intimidate +21, Knowledge (the planes) +21, Listen +21, Search +21, Sense Motive +21, Spot +21. *Feats:* Blind-Fight, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Wingover.

Blindsense (Ex): The dragon notices and locates creatures within a range of 40 feet. Opponents the dragon can't actually see still have 100% concealment against the dragon.

Breath Weapon (Su): 40-ft. cone; damage 8d10 fire; Reflex DC 22 half.

Fire Subtype (Ex): Immune to fire, takes 50% additional damage from cold.

Immunities (Ex): Immune to sleep and paralysis effects.

Keen Senses (Ex): A dragon sees four times as well a human in low-light conditions and twice as well in normal light. It also has darkvision with a range of 400 feet.

***Locate Object* (Sp):** The dragon can use this ability as the spell of the same name, four times per day.

Scent (Ex): Detect opponents within 30 feet. Exact location is not revealed, unless within 5 feet.

Spells Known (6/6; save DC 12 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, flare, light, read magic, touch of fatigue;* 1st—*mage armor, magic missile, shield.* Caster level 3rd.

Adult Red Dragon: CR 15; Huge dragon (fire); HD 22d12+110; hp 253; Init +4; Spd 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor), fly 160 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 29, touch 8, flat-footed 29; Base Atk +22; Grp +32; Atk +31 melee (2d8+11, bite); Full Atk +31 melee (2d8+11, bite) and +26 melee (2d6+5, 2 claws) and +26 melee (1d8+5, 2 wings) and +26

melee (2d6+16, tail slap); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA breath weapon, crush, frightful presence, *locate object,* spells; SQ blindsense, DR 5/magic, immunities (fire, paralysis, sleep), keen senses, scent, SR 21; AL CE; SV Fort +18, Ref +13, Will +17; Str 33, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 16, Wis 19, Cha 16.

Skills: Concentration +30, Diplomacy +28, Intimidate +28, Knowledge (the planes) +28, Listen +29, Search +28, Sense Motive +29, Spot +29. *Feats:* Blind-Fight, Cleave, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Initiative, Improved Overrun, Power Attack, Wingover.

Blindsense (Ex): The dragon notices and locates creatures within a range of 40 feet. Opponents the dragon can't actually see still have 100% concealment against the dragon.

Breath Weapon (Su): 50-ft. cone of fire; damage 12d10 fire; Reflex DC 26 half.

Fire Subtype (Ex): Immune to fire, takes 50% additional damage from cold.

Frightful Presence (Ex): When the dragon charges or attacks, it inspires terror in all creatures within 180 feet that have fewer Hit Dice or levels than it has. A potentially affected creature that succeeds at a DC 24 Will save remains immune to that dragon's frightful presence for one day. On a failure, creatures with 4 or fewer HD become panicked for 4d6 rounds and those with 5 or more HD become shaken for 4d6 rounds. Dragons ignore the frightful presence of other dragons.

Immunities (Ex): Immune to sleep and paralysis effects.

Keen Senses (Ex): A dragon sees four times as well a human in low-light conditions and twice as well in normal light. It also has darkvision with a range of 600 feet.

***Locate Object* (Sp):** The dragon can use this ability as the spell of the same name, six times per day.

Scent (Ex): Detect opponents within 30 feet. Exact location is not revealed, unless within 5 feet.

Spells Known (6/7/7/5; save DC 13 + spell level): 0—*acid splash, detect magic, flare, light, mage hand, read magic, touch of fatigue;* 1st—*burning hands, mage armor, magic missile, shield, sleep;* 2nd—*hold person, protection from energy, scorching ray;* 3rd—*fireball, haste*. Caster level 7th.

NPC STATISTICS

The following NPCs are encountered in various areas of Tu'narath. They are presented in alphabetical order.

Dwern Splinteraxe, Male Half-Celestial Dwarf Ftr 10: CR 12; Medium outsider (augmented humanoid, native); HD 10d10+60; hp 125; Init +0; Spd 20 ft., fly 20 ft. (average), fly 120 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 24, touch 10, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +10; Grp +17; Atk +21 melee (1d10+11/19–20/×3, +2 *dwarven waraxe*) or +17 melee (1d6+7, bite); Full Atk +21/+16 melee (1d10+11/19–20/×3, +2 *dwarven waraxe*) and +17 melee (1d6+7, bite) or +17 melee (1d6+7, bite) and +12 melee (1d4+3, 2 claws); SA smite evil 1/day, spell-like abilities; SQ DR 5/magic, darkvision 60 ft., daylight, dwarf traits, evasion (granted by ring), immunity to disease, outsider traits, resistance 10 (acid, cold, and electricity), SR 20; AL LG; SV Fort +13, Ref +3, Will +6; Str 24, Dex 11, Con 22, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills: Climb +14, Intimidate +16, Jump +14. *Feats:* Cleave, Great Cleave, Greater Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe), Improved Critical (dwarven waraxe), Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe), Weapon Specialization (dwarven waraxe).

Daylight (Su): Dwern can use *daylight* (as the spell) at will.

Smite Evil (Su): Once per day, Dwern can make a normal melee attack to deal 10 points of extra damage to an evil foe.

Spell-like Abilities: 3/day—*protection from evil* (DC 14); 1/day—*aid, bless, cure serious wounds* (DC 16), *detect evil, dispel evil* (DC 18), *holy smite* (DC 17), *neutralize poison* (DC 16), *remove disease* (DC 16). Caster level 10th; save DC 13 + spell level.

Possessions: +2 full plate, +1 heavy steel shield, +2 dwarven waraxe, gauntlets of ogre power, ring of evasion, key to chest in area **5C**.

Eximil, Male Githzerai Mnk 11: CR 12; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 11d8+11; hp 72; Init +4; Spd 60 ft., fly 80 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 22, touch 18, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +8; Grp +10; Atk +10 melee (1d10+2, unarmed strike) or +14 ranged (1d8+4/×3, masterwork composite longbow [+2 Str] with +2 *arrow*); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d10+2, unarmed strike) or +10/+10/+10/+5 melee (1d10+2, flurry of blows) or +17/+12 ranged (1d8+4/×3, composite longbow [+2 Str] with +2 *arrow*); SA

NEW ITEM

Rod of Astral Vengeance: Fashioned from gray-black astral driftmetal, this 13-inch-long rod can be wielded as a *+2 club.* Any creature damaged by the rod must succeed at a DC 15 Will save or succumb to a mind-affecting burst of psychic energy and be stunned for 1d4 rounds.

Moderate enchantment; CL 9th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Rod, *greater magic weapon,* can only be created on the Astral Plane; Price 26,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

ki strike (magic, lawful); SQ darkvision 60 ft., diamond body, improved evasion, *inertial armor*, leap of the clouds, *psionics*, purity of body, slow fall 50 ft., SR 16, still mind, wholeness of body (22 hp/day); AL LN; SV Fort +8, Ref +11, Will +9; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 11.

Skills: Balance +10, Climb +8, Escape Artist +6, Hide +9, Jump +10, Knowledge (the planes) +2, Listen +6, Move Silently +10, Tumble +12. *Feats:* Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Improved Unarmed Strike, Mobility, Spring Attack, Stunning Fist.

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*daze* (save DC 10), *feather fall*, *shatter* (DC 12); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 17). Caster level 11th; save DC 10 + spell level.

***Inertial Armor* (Sp):** Githzerai can use psychic force to block an enemy's blows. This gives them a +4 armor bonus as long as they remain conscious.

Possessions: Masterwork composite longbow (+2 Str) with 20 *+2 arrows*, *belt of giant strength +4*, *amulet of health +2*, *potion of cure serious wounds*, gray cloak.

Kir'yal the Hr'a'cknir, Female Githyanki Wiz 14: CR 15; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 14d4–14; hp 21; Init +0; Spd 30 ft., fly 240 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +7; Grp +5; Atk +6 melee (1d4–1/19–20, *+1 dagger*); Full Atk +6/+1 melee (1d4–1/19–20, +1 dagger); SA *psionics*, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., *psionics*, SR 19; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +11; Str 7, Dex 11, Con 8, Int 24, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Skills: Concentration +19, Craft (bookbinding) +24, Craft (calligraphy) +24, Decipher Script +24, Knowledge (arcana) +24, Knowledge (history) +24, Knowledge (local) +24, Knowledge (the planes) +24, Spellcraft +26. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Eschew Materials, Extend Spell, Improved Counterspell, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Skill Focus (Concentration), Spell Mastery (*clairvoyance/clairaudience, eyebite, locate creature, nondetection, scrying, see invisibility, true seeing*).

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*augury, clairvoyance/clairaudience, detect thoughts* (DC 14), *mage hand, telekinesis* (DC 17); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 19). Caster level 14th; save DC 12 + spell level. Some of Kir'yal's psionic powers are not typically available to githyanki; this is the case with all githyanki hr'a'cknir.

Spells Prepared (4/6/6/6/5/4/4/3; save DC 17 + spell level): 0—*detect magic* ×2, *light, touch of fatigue*; 1st—*identify, magic missile* ×3, *ray of enfeeblement, true strike*; 2nd—*darkness*, extended *shield, scorching ray* ×2, *see invisibility* ×2; 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance* ×3, *lightning bolt, nondetection, tongues*; 4th—*confusion, locate creature, scrying* ×3; 5th—extended *scrying* ×2, *Mordenkainen's faithful hound, wall of force*; 6th—*analyze dweomer, greater dispel magic, eyebite, true seeing*; 7th—*greater scrying* ×2, *vision*.

Spellbook: 0—all; 1st—*identify, mage armor, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield, true strike, unseen servant*; 2nd—*darkness, detect thoughts, locate object, Melf's acid arrow, scorching ray, see invisibility*; 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance, lightning bolt, nondetection, protection from energy, tongues*; 4th—*arcane sight, confusion, detect scrying, locate creature, scrying, stoneskin*; 5th—*contact other plane, magic jar, Mordenkainen's faithful hound, wall of force*; 6th—*analyze dweomer, greater dispel magic, eyebite, legend lore, mass suggestion, true seeing*; 7th—*banishment, greater scrying, Mordenkainen's sword, vision*.

Possessions: +1 dagger, pearl of power (4th-level spell), amulet of natural armor +1, bracers of armor +3, ring of protection +2, headband of intellect +2, spellbooks.

Maggoth Ashbeard, Male Half-fiend Dwarf Rog 12: CR 15; Medium outsider (augmented humanoid, native); HD 12d6+24; hp 68; Init +9; Spd 20 ft., fly 20 ft. (average), fly 170 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 23, touch 15, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +9; Grp +12; Atk +14 melee (1d10+5/×3, *+2 dwarven waraxe*) or +15 ranged (1d8+4/×3, composite longbow [+3 Str] with *+1 arrow*); Full Atk +14/+9 melee (1d10+5/×3, *+2 dwarven waraxe*) or +15/+10 ranged (1d8+4/×3, composite longbow with *+1 arrow*); SA opportunist, smite good 1/day, sneak attack +6d6, spell-like abilities; SQ DR 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits, evasion, immunity to poison, improved uncanny dodge, resistance 10 (acid, cold, electricity, and fire), SR 22, trapfinding, trap sense +4; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +16, Will +6; Str 16, Dex 21, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills: Appraise +18, Balance +7, Disable Device +20, Escape Artist +20, Hide +25, Intimidate +15, Jump +5, Listen +14, Move Silently +25, Open Lock +20, Search +18, Spot +14, Tumble +20. *Feats:* Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Martial Weapon Proficiency (dwarven waraxe), Mobility, Spring Attack.

Smite Good (Su): Once per day, Maggoth can make a normal melee attack to deal 12 points of extra damage to a good foe.

Spell-like Abilities: 3/day—*darkness, poison* (DC 13); 1/day—*blasphemy* (DC 17), *contagion* (DC 13), *desecrate, unholy blight* (DC 14). Caster level 12th; save DC 10 + spell level.

Possessions: +3 shadow leather armor, +1 buckler, +2 dwarven waraxe, composite longbow (+3 Str) with 20 *+1 arrows*, *cloak of resistance +3*, *boots of elvenkind*, key to chest in area **5F**.

Mivim the Hr'a'cknir, Male Githyanki Nec 12: CR 13; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 12d4+36; hp 60; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 180 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +6; Grp +5; Atk +7 melee (1d6+1 plus stun, *rod of astral vengeance*) or +7 melee

touch (death, *mask of the skull*); Full Atk +7/+2 melee (1d6+1 plus stun, *rod of astral vengeance*) or +7 melee touch (death, *mask of the skull*); SA *psionics*, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., displacement (20% miss chance granted by body wrappings), *psionics*, SR 17; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +9; Str 9, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 13, Cha 13.

Skills: Concentration +18, Decipher Script +19, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (history) +19, Knowledge (the planes) +19, Spellcraft +21. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Rod, Craft Wondrous Item, Great Fortitude, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy).

***Psionics* (Sp):** At will—*arcane sight, see invisibility*; 3/day—*sending*; 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 18), *Rary's telepathic bond*. Caster level 12th; save DC 11 + spell level. Some of Mivim's psionic powers are not typically available to githyanki; this is the case with all githyanki hr'a'cknir.

Spells Prepared (5/6/6/6/5/4/3; save DC 14 + spell level, DC 16 + spell level for necromancy spells): 0—*daze, detect poison, message, touch of fatigue* ×2; 1st—*chill touch, magic missile, protection from good, ray of enfeeblement* ×2, *shield*; 2nd—*blindness/deafness, darkness, false life, knock, spectral hand, touch of idiocy*; 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance, haste, hold person, ray of exhaustion, slow, vampiric touch*; 4th—*animate dead, bestow curse, dimensional anchor, enervation, stoneskin*; 5th—*break enchantment, dominate person, wall of force, waves of fatigue*; 6th—*chain lightning, circle of death, greater dispel magic*.

Mivim cannot cast conjuration spells.

Spellbook: 0—all except *acid splash*; 1st—*cause fear, chill touch, expeditious retreat, magic missile, protection from good, ray of enfeeblement, shield, shocking grasp*; 2nd—*arcane lock, blindness/deafness, command undead, darkness, daze monster, false life, knock, scare, spectral hand, touch of idiocy*; 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance, fireball, greater magic weapon, haste, hold person, lightning bolt, magic circle against good, nondetection, protection from energy, ray of exhaustion, slow, vampiric touch*; 4th—*animate dead, bestow curse, contagion, crushing despair, dimensional anchor, enervation, fear, scrying, stoneskin, wall of fire*; 5th—*break enchantment, contact other plane, dominate person, hold monster, magic jar, passwall, telekinesis, wall of force, waves of fatigue*; 6th—*analyze dweomer, chain lightning, circle of death, create undead, disintegrate, eyebite, flesh to stone, greater dispel magic, Tenser's transformation*.

Possessions: Bracers of armor +6, mask of the skull, rod of astral vengeance (see the sidebar), *body wrappings of minor displacement* (treat as a *minor cloak of displacement*), *ring of protection +2*, spellbook.

Rhapsody Nethervane, Female Tiefling Brd 13: CR 14; Medium outsider (native); HD 13d6; hp 49; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 130 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +9; Grp +9; Atk +10 melee (1d6+1/18–20, *+1 rapier*) or +11 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d6+1/18–20, *+1 rapier*) or +11 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); SA *darkness, fascinate*, spells, *suggestion*; SQ bardic music, bardic knowledge, countersong, inspire competence, inspire courage +2, inspire greatness, resistance 5 (cold, electricity, and fire), *song of freedom*; AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +10, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 19.

Skills: Bluff +22, Concentration +16, Diplomacy +6, Disguise +22, Escape Artist +10, Gather Information +20, Hide +12, Intimidate +6, Sleight of Hand +20, Spellcraft +17. *Feats:* Dodge, Expertise, Improved Disarm, Mobility, Spring Attack.

***Darkness* (Sp):** Rhapsody can use *darkness* once per day (caster level 13th).

Spells Known (3/4/4/4/3; base save DC = 14 + spell level): 0—*dancing lights, detect magic, light, mage hand, prestidigitation, read magic*; 1st—*charm person, cure light wounds, mage armor, unseen servant*; 2nd—*cure moderate wounds, detect thoughts, see invisibility, Tasha's hideous laughter*; 3rd—*confusion, displacement, emotion, haste*; 4th—*dimension door, greater invisibility, hold monster, shout*.

Possessions: +1 rapier, light crossbow with 20 bolts, *necklace of sonic bursts* (*type IV*)*, *ioun stone* (*incandescent blue*), *wand of mirror image* (3rd level; 25 charges), *potion of alter self*, pouch containing 10 pp, iron keys to all locked doors in the Morningstar Inn, spare keys for the inn's guest rooms.

*As necklace of fireballs except it deals sonic damage.

Vilghoon, Male Githyanki Rog 6/Asn 10: CR 17; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 16d6+48; hp 100; Init +6; Spd 30 ft., fly 140 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 22, touch 15, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +11; Grp +12; Atk +20 melee (1d6+3/18–20 and wounding, *+2 wounding rapier*); Full Atk +20/+15/+10 melee (1d6+3/18–20 and wounding, *+2 wounding rapier*); SA death attack, poison use, *psionics*, sneak attack +8d6; SQ darkvision 60 ft., evasion, improved uncanny dodge, *psionics*, SR 21, trapfinding, trap sense +5; AL NE; SV Fort +10 (+15 against poison), Ref +20, Will +7; Str 12, Dex 22, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Balance +27, Climb +10, Disguise +18, Gather Information +8, Hide +32, Intimidate +11, Jump +3, Listen +9, Move Silently +32, Spot +9, Tumble +25. *Feats:* Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Stealthy, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier).

Spells Known (4/4/3/3; save DC 12 + spell level): 1st—*disguise self, jump, sleep, true strike*; 2nd—*alter self, cat's grace, illusory script, pass without trace*; 3rd—*deep slumber, deeper darkness,*

misdirection, nondetection; 4th—*clairaudience/clairvoyance, freedom of movement, greater invisibility, poison.*

Death Attack (Ex): After studying victim for 3 rounds, successful melee attack can paralyze or kill. Fortitude save (DC 22) negates.

Poison Use (Ex): Can use poison with no risk of poisoning self.

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 9), *dimension door* (DC 13), *mage hand, telekinesis* (DC 14); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 16). Caster level 16th; save DC 9 + spell level.

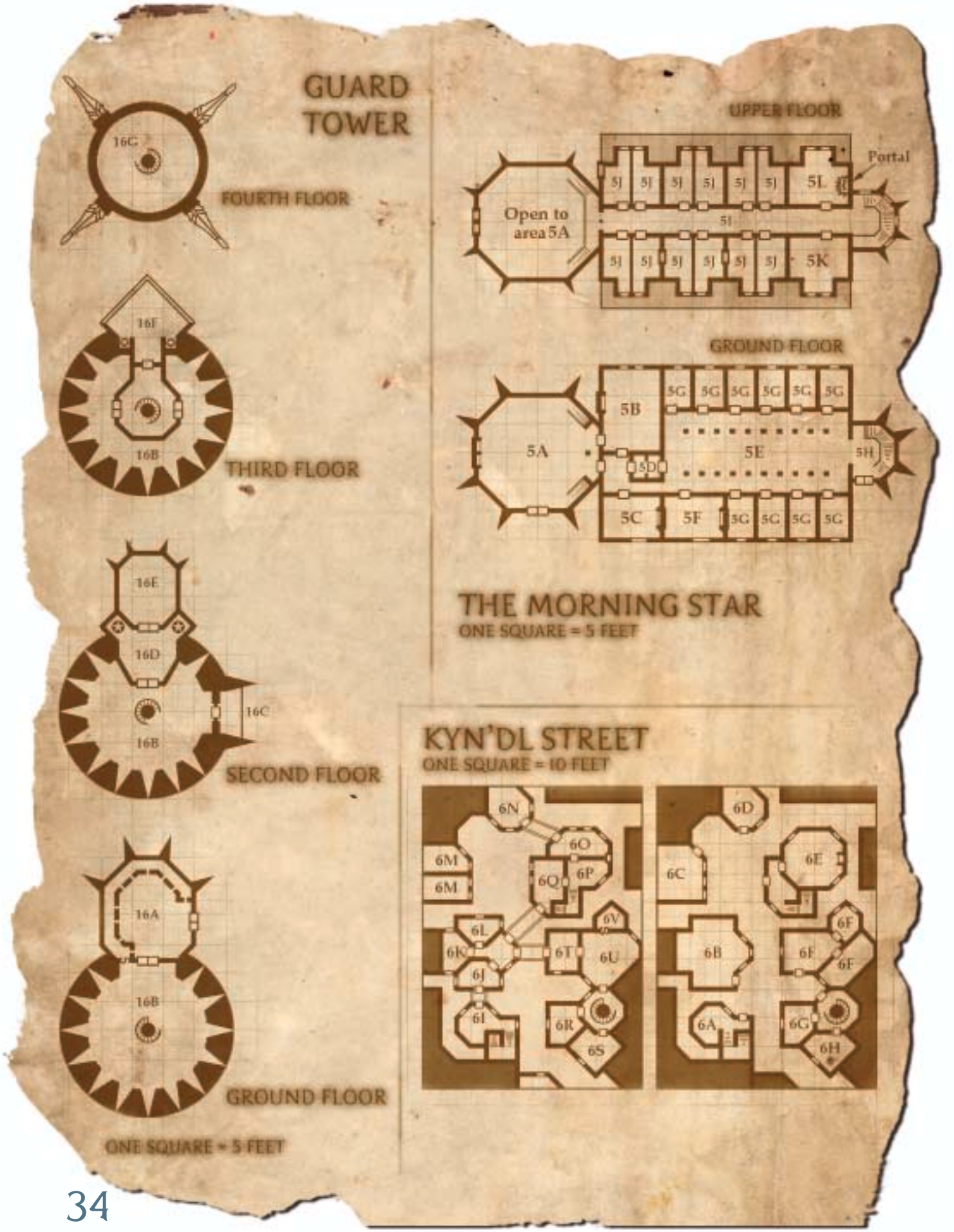
Possessions: +3 shadow studded leather, +2 rapier of wounding, dagger of venom, gloves of Dexterity +4, cloak of resistance +2, boots of elvenkind, amulet of proof against detection and location.

Yev'dakai (Commissar of Tu'narath), Male Githyanki Ftr 15: CR 16; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 15d10+30; hp 152; Init +1; Spd 20 ft. (base 30 ft.), fly 110 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 22, touch 13, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +15; Grp +18; Atk +21 melee (2d6+8/17–20, *+2 silver sword*) or +17 ranged (1d8+4/×3 plus 2d6 unholy, *+1 unholy composite longbow* [*+3 Str*]) Full Atk +21/+16/+11 melee (2d6+8/17–20, *+2 silver sword*) or +17/+12/+7 ranged (1d8+4/×3 plus 2d6 unholy, *+1 unholy composite longbow* [*+3 Str*]) or +15/+15/+10/+5 ranged (1d8+4/×3 plus 2d6 unholy, *+1 unholy composite longbow* [*+3 Str*] with Rapid Shot); SA *psionics;* SQ darkvision 60 ft., *psionics,* SR 20; AL LE; SV Fort +11, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 16.

Skills: Intimidate +21, Ride +19. *Feats:* Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*silver sword*), Great Cleave, Improved Critical (greatsword), Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

***Psionics* (Sp):** At will—*daze* (DC 13), *mage hand;* 3/day—*blur, dimension door* (DC 17), *telekinesis* (DC 18); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 20). Caster level 15th; save DC 13 + spell level.

Possessions: +2 breastplate of command, +2 silver sword, +1 unholy composite longbow (*+3 Str*) with 50 arrows, *amulet of natural armor +2, ring of protection +2.*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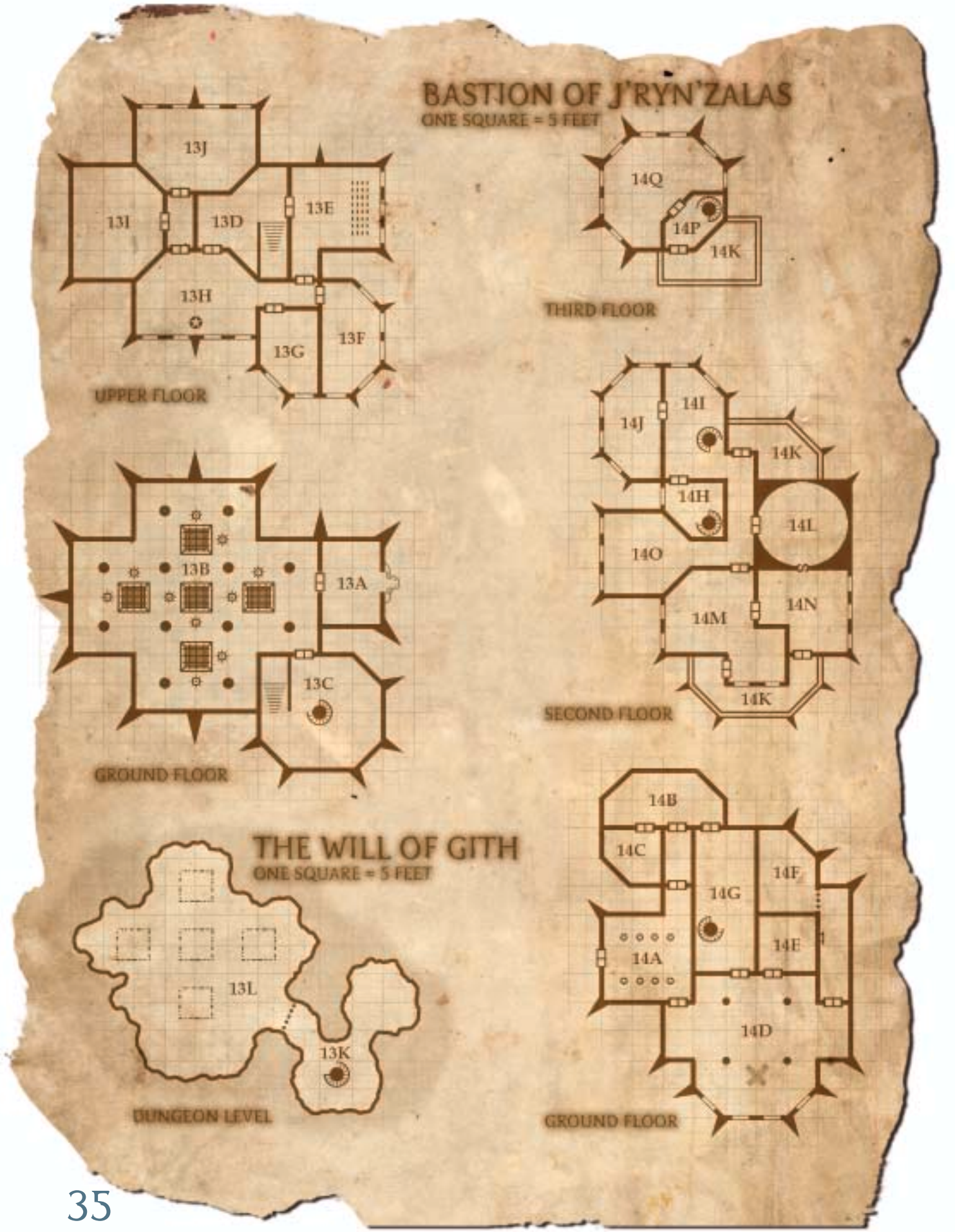
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Dungeon WEB ENHANCEMENT
ISSUE 100

THE LICH-QUEENS BELOVED

BY CHRISTOPHER PERKINS & PETER ADKISON
ARTWORK BY DEREK THOMPSON

The Flying Fortresses surrounding the githyanki capital of Tu'narath can serve as part of an expanded adventure set in and around the city. The following description accompanies the map of the fortresses from the poster map accompanying issue #100.

FLYING FORTRESS (EL 18)

Beyond the city's gravity, floating at various heights around the upper torso and head of the dead god, are numerous defense platforms, where githyanki squads maintain vigilant watch over the city and the astral haze surrounding it. Each defense platform features a small fortress built into a floating chunk of rock; tethered by chains to this fortress are four smaller guard towers built on smaller chunks of astral debris. These structures do not have gravity; creatures move around by thought, at a speed of 10 feet per point of Intelligence.

The "flying fortresses" are spaced 250 to 500 feet from the city and slowly rotate clockwise on lateral axes, the tethered guard towers orbiting the central fortresses like satellites. A fortress completes one rotation every hour. The fortresses and towers are made of stone set with hundreds of serrated iron spears. The towers have wooden balconies equipped with ballistae (loading time 3 rounds; 3d6 points of damage per bolt). The enormous chains joining the towers to the fortress core are crafted from astral driftmetal (hardness 12; hp 360 each; break DC 45) and measure 200 feet long each.

Creatures: Each fortress is defended by 64 3rd-level githyanki fighters, plus two 7th-level sergeants (called sarths), one 9th-level captain (called the kith'rak), and a juvenile red dragon. The total force counts as one EL 18 encounter once all of the fortress's defenses are bought to bear, since the githyanki sarths can move quickly through the Astral Plane or use their quickened *dimension door* abilities to "hop about" (and bring limited reinforcements through the *dimension door*) instantaneously.

Development: Any attack launched against a fortress brings immediate aid from 1d4 adjacent fortresses. The flying fortresses are close enough that githyanki sarths and kith'raks can use *dimension door* to reach nearby platforms, bringing additional troops with them.

DEREK THOMPSON

1A. LOWER LEVEL

Jutting from the "underside" of the fortress is an octagonal stone tower enclosed by a 3-foot-high iron-wrought battlement. Eight ballistae are mounted along the edge of the tower, poised to fire in various directions. Hinges on the mounts allow the ballistae to point straight up or tilt down, as required. Next to each ballista rests an unlocked iron trunk containing 6 *+1 flaming ballista bolts* (which deal 3d6+1 points of damage plus 1d6 points of fire damage each) and 6 normal ballista bolts.

A 5-foot-diameter, 20-foot-long shaft connects a circular hole in the floor of the tower roof to the fortress core. No ladder or other fixture fills the chute, but one can easily navigate the shaft by thought, per movement on the Astral Plane.

1B. NEXUS

This core chamber connects to almost every other room in the fortress proper. A smooth, 5-foot-diameter shaft in the "floor" leads to the tower on the fortress's underbelly (area **1A**). A similar shaft leads up to the main hall (area **1G**). Oval archways lead to areas **1C**–**1F**. Ambient light from the surrounding chambers provides dim illumination here.

1C. BARRACKS

Three windows allow the silver luminescence of the Astral Plane to illuminate the room. The central window is a 6-foot-diameter circular hole open to the sky—wide enough for the juvenile dragon or any other Large creature to pass through expeditiously.

1D. SARTHS' QUARTERS

The githyanki sarths lair here, although they are usually found roaming the fortress.

1E. KITH'RAK'S QUARTERS

The captain's chamber contains a tall chair behind a somewhat imperious desk. When not roaming the fortress or reporting to superiors in the city, the githyanki kith'rak resides here.

Treasure: The desk contains a cleverly hidden secret drawer (DC 33 Search check) that and holds a collection of 1d6 potions (roll randomly).

1F. DRAGON'S DEN

This chamber holds the kith'rak's juvenile red dragon mount and its small collection of coins (a token reward for the dragon's loyalty). Three windows set into a wall allow the Astral Plane's silvery luster to illuminate the chamber. The central window is actually a circular, 6-foot-diameter gaping aperture that the dragon uses to enter and leave the chamber.

Creature: Not surprisingly, the juvenile red dragon has a fiery temperament, and it eagerly accepts any invitation to battle. Although the dragon is small enough to navigate the more constricting areas of the fortress, it prefers to fight in this room or out in the silver void.

Tactics: The dragon is trained to work well with the dragons in neighboring fortresses, using aid another and flanking tactics to take down hard-to-hit prey. The dragon also knows that its wings are not required to propel it through the silver void, which means it can hover in place and attack with its wings as well as its claws, bite, and tail.

Treasure: The dragon floats in the air when it sleeps. The dragon's hoard lies in the middle of the floor: 2d6 × 1,000 cp, 1d8 × 1,000 sp, 1d4 × 1,000 gp, 1d6 gems (500 gp each), 1d4 pieces of jewelry (1,000 gp each), and 1d4 masterwork items (usually armor, shields, or weapons). If the heroes plunder more than one dragon's hoard, feel free to replace the gems and jewelry with other nonmagical items of comparable value (goblets, flagons, amphoras, statuettes, ceremonial daggers, bejeweled combs, golden holy symbols, and so on).

1G. GATHERING HALL

A 5-foot-diameter shaft in the middle of the floor leads to area **1B**. The mouth of the shaft is ornately carved to resemble the open mouth of a great fresco carved into the surrounding floor—one that depicts the mighty, screaming visage of Gith. The chamber itself is square, with open windows that archers can use to fire upon enemies outside (while reaping the benefits of three-quarters cover).

Two long tables with matching benches are the chamber's sole furnishings.

1H. TETHERED GUARD SATELLITE

Imagine a floating ball of jagged rock with two stout octagonal towers, one built atop the rock and another mounted underneath it, seemingly upside-down. Imagine a smooth, 5-foot-diameter shaft boring through the middle of the rock to connect the two towers, each of which has protruding wooden balconies equipped with ballistae. Finally, imagine that the whole thing is tethered to a larger fortress by a 200-foot-long iron chain, and you have an accurate picture of this peculiar, floating structure.

Each of these satellites has an "upper" and a "lower" tower, although orientation in the Astral Plane renders such classifications purely subjective. Without gravity hindering them, the githyanki guarding these towers can move between the levels without having to adjust their orientation to match a dominant gravity field.

Each tower balcony has three ballistae with adjustable mounts that enable the weapons to point in various directions

(including straight up). Next to each ballista rests an unlocked iron trunk containing 12 nonmagical ballista bolts.

Creatures: Each satellite encircling the main fortress houses twelve 3rd-level githyanki guards—six on the "upper" tower and six on the "lower" tower.

GUARD STATISTICS

Guard, Male and Female Githyanki Ftr 3: Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 3d10+9; hp 30; Init +2; Spd 20 ft., fly 130 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; BAB +3; Grap +5; Atk/Full Atk +7 melee (2d6+3/19–20, masterwork greatsword) or +5 ranged (1d8+2/×3, composite longbow [+2 Str]); SA *psionics;* SQ darkvision 60 ft., *psionics,* SR 8; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +3, Knowledge (the planes) +2, Listen +2, Ride +6, Spot +2. *Feats:* Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

Possessions: Breastplate, masterwork greatsword, composite longbow (+2 Str) with 20 arrows.

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 9). Caster level 3rd.

Sarth, Male and Female Githyanki Ftr 7: Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 7d10+21; hp 64; Init +2; Spd 20 ft., fly 130 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17; BAB +7; Grap +10; Atk +12 melee (2d6+7/19–20, *+1 greatsword*) or +10 ranged (1d8+4/×3, composite longbow [+3 Str] with *+1 arrow*); Atk +12/+7 melee (2d6+7/19–20, *+1 greatsword*) or +10/+5 ranged (1d8+4/×3, composite longbow [+3 Str] with *+1 arrow*); SA *psionics;* SQ darkvision 60 ft., *psionics,* SR 12; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +5, Knowledge (the planes) +3, Listen +5, Ride +10, Spot +5. *Feats:* Alertness, Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

Possessions: +2 breastplate, +1 greatsword, composite longbow (+3 Str) with 25 *+1 arrows.*

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 9), *dimension door.* Caster level 7th.

Kith'rak, Male or Female Githyanki Ftr 9: Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 9d10+27; hp 81; Init +2; Spd 20 ft., fly 130 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 19; BAB +9; Grap +12; Atk +14 melee (2d6+7/17–20, *+1 keen greatsword*) or +13 ranged (1d8+5/×3 plus 1d6 fire, composite longbow [+3 Str] with *+2 flaming arrow*); Atk +14/+9 melee (2d6+7/17–20, +1 keen greatsword) or +13/+8 ranged (1d8+5/×3 plus 1d6 fire, composite longbow [+3 Str] with *+2 flaming arrow*); SA *psionics;* SQ darkvision 60 ft., *psionics,* spell resistance 14; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 9.

Skills: Intimidate +7, Knowledge (the planes) +5, Listen +5, Ride +10, Spot +5. *Feats:* Alertness, Iron Will, Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Ride-By Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

Possessions: +2 astral driftmetal breastplate, +1 keen greatsword, composite longbow (+3 Str) with 25 *+2 flaming arrows.*

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 9), *dimension door, plane shift* (DC 16) *telekinesis* (DC 14). Caster level 9th.

Juvenile Red Dragon: hp 168; *Monster Manual* 75.

THE SACRED ORDER OF MAN-BEASTS

The Sacred Order of Man-Beasts, also known as "The Reborn," are an order of monks and druids dedicated to the natural order of things—that is, the honoring of the land and the bestial nature that is in the heart of man (as they view it). As an order they actively seek to stem, and ultimately reverse, the advancement of civilization. The Agents and Allies featuring the NPC Lone Tooth, by Peter Adkison, presents a member of this unique society.

ALIGNMENT AND PHILOSOPHY

The order's alignment tends toward lawful neutral. Their leanings toward lawfulness are due to the influence of the monks in the order, which drives the order to a systemic, structured approach to their plans. About half of the order's druids are also lawful neutral. The druids who are not lawful neutral help maintain debate and a certain degree of healthy tension in the group, but rarely get their way on major issues. The order veers away from evil due to its respect for nature and all things natural; it is offended by the wanton, careless destruction typical of most evil. However the order is also offended by the destruction and pollution of nature that comes at the hands of civilization, believing strongly that all being should live in harmony with the land—in fact, the order believes in this so strongly that it uses violence to enforce its views. Since the violence could be directed at the woodsmen of fair races, the order would not be considered a force for good by most.

The order believes that, ultimately, all beings should seek to live as one with nature, ideally as an animal life form. Animals are viewed as the most sacred of all life: pure, wild, driven by instinct, ranging free, taking only what they need and living at one with the earth. Given this pursuit, members of the Sacred Order of Man-Beasts see the druidic spell, *reincarnation,* as the most desirable end for all.

VIEWS ON REINCARNATION

The order offers free *reincarnation* spells to any being who has passed on. If a dead body is brought to an outpost of the order they freely *reincarnate* the soul using the standard spell. Occasionally, either to make a point or simply to advance their cause, a higher level member of the order will go to the scene of a battle or other place where many recently-dead corpses lie and casts multiple reincarnation spells. Areas where this order is active have a higher-than-normal population of reincarnated beings.

THE RITUAL OF REBIRTH

The most interesting ritual is reserved for the devout members of the order. Upon reaching 9th level or higher (in any combination of classes, as long as at least five of the levels are in monk or druid), members of the order can partake in the Ritual of Rebirth. In the ritual, the devotee is essentially slain and then reincarnated using the *dire reincarnation* spell (a new spell—see below). *Dire reincarnation* is a higher level version of the reincarnate spell that provides a selection of outcomes that is more in line with the order's goals. The only outcome of a casting of this spell is to be reborn as a dire animal, serving the order's goal of "returning to nature." Furthermore, the outcomes are very powerful animals so that devotees can continue to serve the order and act as more effective natural guardians of its goals and secrets.

Dire Reincarnation

Transmutation
Level: Drd 8
Components: V, S, M, DF
Casting Time: 1 hour
Range: Touch
Target: Dead creature touched
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None; see text
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

This spell works exactly as the *reincarnate* spell found in the *Player's Handbook*, except the list of possible new forms consists only of dire animals (see below). In addition, the entire body of the deceased creature need not be present for the casting of *dire reincarnate*. A portion of the body is sufficient. The creature can also have been dead for a longer period of time prior to the spell's casting, up to one month per caster level.

d%	Incarnation	Str	Dex	Con
01–13	Dire rat	+0	+6	+2
14–26	Dire weasel	+4	+8	+0
27–39	Dire badger	+4	+6	+8
40–50	Dire bat	+6	+12	+6
51–59	Dire ape	+12	+4	+4
60–68	Dire wolverine	+12	+6	+8
69–77	Dire wolf	+14	+4	+6
78–84	Dire boar	+16	+0	+6
85–90	Dire lion	+14	+4	+6
91–96	Dire bear	+20	+2	+4
97–100	Dire tiger	+16	+4	+6

As with *reincarnate*, the subject of a *dire reincarnate* spell gains all abilities associated with its new form, including forms of movement and speeds, natural armor, natural attacks, extraordinary abilities, and the like.

A *wish* or *miracle* spell can restore a reincarnated character to his or her original form, although the reincarnated creature can resist if it chooses (Will negates).

Material Component: Rare oils and unguents worth a total of at least 5,000 gp, spread over the remains.

Like what you see?
This Web enhancement is only a sample of the suplemental material for issue #100. Coming soon to www.paizo.com, another adventure's worth of content featuring your very own guided tour of Tu'narath, githyanki capital and home of the Lich Queen. We'll be offering it for sale, along with several accompanying maps, very soon on our website.
Stay tuned!

DUNGEON 100 MAP CORRECTIONS

CARTOGRAPHY BY PETER WHITLEY

We try to get them all right, all the time, but sometimes we blow it. In two of the adventures in issue #100, three maps were improperly or inaccurately labeled. Below you'll find the three maps with corrections. The first two are for "Old Embers Never Die," and the last is for "Woe to Mistledale." Our apologies for the errors.

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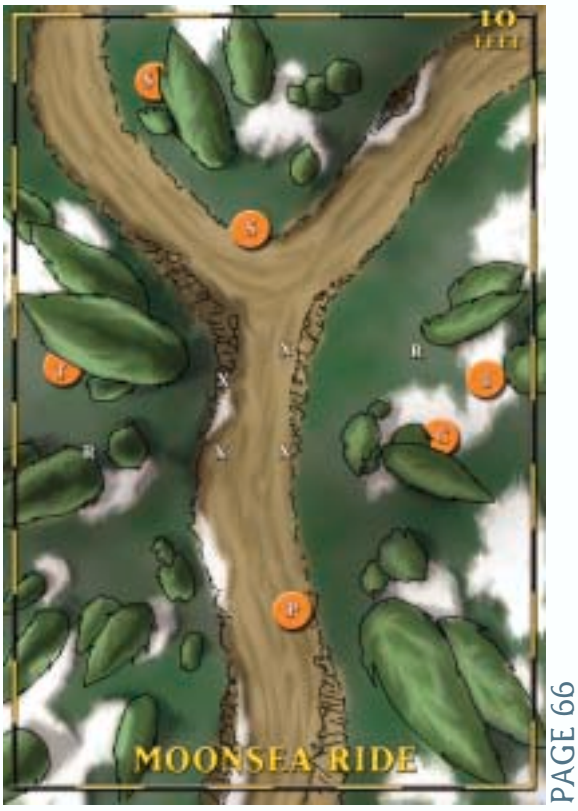

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Dungeon WEB SUPPLEMENT
ISSUE 100

WELCOME TO TU'NARATH

BY CHRISTOPHER PERKINS
ARTWORK BY JAMES RYMAN, NIKLASS JANSSON & MARK SASSO

This Web supplement designed for "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" assumes you have a copy of issue #100 containing both the adventure and the poster map of Tu'narath, the githyanki capital city. Although the poster map of Tu'narath shows only its "upper" side (where most of the city's population gathers), one can just as easily walk along the "edges" and "underside" to reach structures and regions located there.

For more general information about Tu'narath, its occupants, its architecture, and its laws, see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" adventure.

APPROACHING AND LEAVING TU'NARATH

Protecting the city are more than a dozen fortresses built into large fragments of rock adrift in the Astral Plane. When an unfamiliar astral ship or astral-faring retinue approaches Tu'narath, the nearest "flying fortress" dispatches an escort to intercept the approaching vessel or retinue: a githyanki kith'rak (captain) astride a juvenile red dragon. When approaching an astral ship, the dragon positions itself outside the firing arcs of the ship's visible weaponry, but drifts close enough to blast the decks with its fiery breath, if necessary. See the issue #100 Web enhancement and the poster map of Tu'narath for details on these orbiting fortresses.

When confronting a githyanki retinue or githyanki-crewed astral ship, the githyanki kith'rak merely ushers the vessel to the city docks before returning to the flying fortress.

When confronting a retinue that includes nongithyanki, the kith'rak demands to know their business in Tu'narath and instructs nongithyanki to confine themselves to the Merchant District (area 7), lest they be killed on sight. If the visitors are belligerent or recognized as enemies of the githyanki people, the kith'rak and its dragon mount attack immediately. This draws the attention of nearby flying fortresses, which send reinforcements (see area 1).

When confronting a vessel populated by nongithyanki, the githyanki kith'rak requires that the vessel undergo a thorough search before proceeding. The kith'rak uses his or her dimension door ability to appear on deck and begins systematically inspecting every compartment and container on the ship—a process taking several minutes. Meanwhile, the dragon circles the ship, ready to blast it with fire if the crew turns against the kith'rak or takes other rash actions. If the kith'rak finds nothing amiss, he or she directs the crew to follow the dragon to the docks of the Merchant District (area 7). A stern warning follows: Any deviation in course will result in the destruction of the ship and its crew.

If the kith'rak's search of the ship reveals dangerous cargo, known criminals, or racial enemies (githzerai, illithids, or psurlons), the kith'rak orders the red dragon to blast the vessel with its fiery breath. All of the flying fortresses around the city are alerted and send reinforcements, as needed. If everything appears in order, the kith'rak uses his or her *dimension door* ability to return to the circling dragon, at which point they escort the ship to the city docks.

Leaving Tu'narath is generally simpler than arriving. Unless the githyanki have a good reason to prevent an astral ship or retinue from leaving the city—for example, they suspect that a githzerai might be hiding among an astral ship's crew—they let the visitors depart unsearched and unimpeded.

Githyanki Kith'rak: hp 102; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Juvenile Red Dragon: hp 168; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

CITY FEATURES

The following features are common throughout the city.

DOORS AND WINDOWS

A building's outer doors are single slabs of elaborately worked stone set with iron hinges and good-quality locks (Open Lock DC 30). Interior doors are made of reinforced wood brought to the Astral Plane from various other planes and often have average locks set into them (Open Lock DC 25). Windows come equipped with openable glass panes and ornate lattices of iron bars to discourage unwanted intrusion.

Outer (Stone) Door: 2 in. thick; hardness 8; hp 30; break DC 25.

Inner (Good Wooden) Door: 1-1/2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 15; break DC 18.

Window (Iron) Bars: 1 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 30; break DC 28.

WALLS, FLOORS, AND CEILINGS

Skillfully wrought carvings of githyanki champions and battle scenes elaborate the outer walls of most public and civic buildings. Inner and outer walls are of superior masonry. Ground floors are made of smooth stone, sometimes covered with wooden planks, while upper stories consist of wooden tiles or planks set atop thick wooden beams.

Unless otherwise noted, ceilings inside buildings are 15 feet tall.

Superior Masonry Walls: 1 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 90 per 10-foot-square section; break DC 35; climb DC 15.

Ground (Flagstone) Floors: 1 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 90 per 10-foot-square section; break DC 35.

Upper (Reinforced Wooden) Floors: 6 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 60 hp per 10-foot-square section; break DC 20.

ILLUMINATION

The silver void of the Astral Plane, though dark and ominous in places, provides the city with perpetual light equivalent to an overcast afternoon on the Material Plane. Creatures that normally shun the sun (like mind flayers) can function normally here.

CITY ENCOUNTERS

The following encounters are keyed to the poster map of Tu'narath.

1. FLYING FORTRESSES

For a complete description of the flying fortress, see the free Web enhancement for issue #100 at **www.paizo.com**.

2. ARTISAN DISTRICT

Githyanki use combat, dress, and craft as means to express their individuality. Githyanki artisans, or mlar, specialize in the construction and repair of buildings, tools, weapons, astral ships, and other needed things, but others create sculptures and art pieces. Entire districts of Tu'narath are given over to the mlar, some of whom rely on item creation feats and spells such as *fabricate* and *wall of stone* to complete their works. Some mlar are powerful wizards in their own right, and though they are quick to rally to the city's defense, they have chosen a life apart from the military.

Githyanki artisans both live and work in the Artisan Districts of Tu'narath. Low-level mlar tend to work in great factories and foundries, while mid- to high-level mlar own shops, forges, and "studios." These districts are decorated with statuary, and even the most common buildings have elaborate bas-reliefs on the outer walls and fearsome gargoyles clutching the stone eaves.

Development: Nongithyanki are not welcome in the Artisan District and are arrested on sight. Apprehended characters are taken to The Will of Gith (area **13**) to face punishment; those who resist arrest are killed.

3. FARMER DISTRICT

Inhabitants of the Astral Plane never suffer from hunger or thirst, so there is little need for supplies of food and water. However, githyanki and their red dragon mounts journey to other planes regularly, which usually requires that they bring supplies of food with them. For this reason, Tu'narath has githyanki farmers, or g'lathk. The Farmer District is where the g'lathk live and tend the city's food supply. Large enclosures illuminated by *continual flame* spells and magically enhanced so time passes normally (so plants can grow and mature) hold fungi gardens, while livestock brought to Tu'narath from other planes are herded into caverns beneath the city or allowed to roam about in small pens on the surface.

Githyanki and red dragon "livestock" includes everything from rothé to chained humanoid captives (goblins, kobolds, gnomes, dwarves, halflings, elves, humans, bariaurs, and other "cattle").

In addition to livestock, the g'lathk oversee the disposal of the city's waste by monitoring caverns of giant bombardier beetles, which quickly consume the refuse and offal.

Creatures: G'lathk are typically commoners. Githyanki soldiers (see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for statistics) are assigned to watch over the more intelligent or dangerous livestock, and githyanki assigned to the task usually consider it a punishment.

Development: Nongithyanki are not welcome in the Farmer District and are arrested on sight. Apprehended characters are taken to The Will of Gith (area **13**) to face punishment; those who resist arrest are killed.

4. MERCHANT DISTRICT

Located on one of the city's protruding middle arms, the Merchant District is the only section of Tu'narath open to nongithyanki. Githyanki vigilantly patrol the streets that connect to the rest of the city, and many of the buildings near the boundary of the Merchant District are empty tenements or githyanki guard barracks.

The Merchant District is not maintained as immaculately as other districts, but it is far from dirty and disheveled. The most squalid structures are located among the warehouses at the arm's extremis, near the docks. A few large residences dominate the district's skyline, but most of the buildings are densely packed apartments available for rent at an average cost of 1 gp per room (per 24-hour

period). Since nongithyanki cannot own property in Tu'narath, all buildings have a githyanki landlord (or nil'ghar) who usually lives elsewhere in the city; most landlords are githyanki knights who were bequeathed the estates as rewards for loyal service. They use lower-ranked githyanki or nongithyanki hirelings to collect rental payments and and deal with unwanted tenants.

Creatures: Githyanki who tend to reside in the district include merchants accustomed to dealing with nongithyanki. A githyanki merchant occupies one of the district's larger residences and is typically a gish (see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for statistics). Guarding the merchant's estate is a squad of twelve githyanki soldiers, plus two githyanki sarths (sergeants) and a githyanki kith'rak (captain).

Outside the residence, a githyanki merchant travels in an iron-wrought carriage that walks on four spidery legs. The merchant controls the actions of the carriage, which can hold up to two Large creatures, four Medium creatures, or eight Small creatures. Anyone inside the carriage gains cover against attacks from outside. When traveling in the district, the merchant, the captain, and the two sergeants remain inside the carriage while the guards encircle it.

- **Githyanki Soldiers (12):** hp 34; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.
- **Githyanki Sarths (2):** hp 51 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.
- **Githyanki Kith'rak:** hp 102; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.
- **Githyanki Gish (merchant):** hp 24; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.
- **Walking Iron Carriage:** Huge animated object; hp 84; *Monster Manual* 13.

5. THE MORNINGSTAR INN

The most popular and expensive inn in Tu'narath is The Morningstar. A rhyme-addled tiefling bard named Rhapsody Nethervane runs the establishment and employs two henchmen: a half-celestial dwarf named Dwern and a half-fiend dwarf named Maggoth who constantly try to steer Rhapsody down paths of light and darkness. Rhapsody first encountered the dwarves on separate planar adventures. When all of her adventuring companions perished, she made the dwarves offers they could not refuse and now keeps them around largely for her amusement—but they also make great bouncers.

The Morningstar is an impressive two-story stone edifice with iron-barred windows, broad gables, frightful gargoyles, and flying buttresses. The establishment sports no sign, but a loud ruckus emanates from the common room (area **5A**) at all hours of the endless, astral day.

A one-way portal on the Material Plane leads to one of the bedrooms on the upper floor of the inn (area **5L**). This portal existed long before Rhapsody took over the establishment, and she hasn't seen fit to remove it. In fact, she feels the portal adds to the building's character, despite the fact that not everything that comes through the portal brings sunshine and good tidings.

Refer to the map of The Morningstar Inn for the following keyed encounters.

5A. COMMON ROOM

> An octagonal wooden bar, painted black and adorned with astral whalebone, stands in the middle of an octagonal common room. A scantily clad young woman with cloven hooves instead of feet stands on the bar with a flagon in one hand, regaling patrons with a sordid song about the Naughty Gnome of Amoria. A tiny, incandescent blue orb whirls about the woman's head as she croons and capers.
>
> Tables and chairs surround the bar, and the ceiling soars to its peak 40 feet overhead. Stairs crawl up the walls to an overlooking balcony. Under the balcony, a double archway invites deeper excursions into the establishment. Large fires fill a double hearth set into the opposite wall. Standing on either side of it is a dour dwarf. One has alabaster-white skin, opalescent eyes, a golden beard, and feathered wings. The other has bat wings, eyes like dying embers, and a smoldering ash-gray beard.
>
> Mounted above the hearth are three broken weapons: a greatsword, a quarterstaff, and a waraxe. An ugly iron chandelier hangs by a chain over the bar, its continual flames illuminating the room and casting many shadows.

The sundered masterwork weapons—as the inn's proprietor is quick to tell—are all that remains of Rhapsody's former adventuring colleagues. "No finer lot has the Reaper got," she sings morbidly. The fighter, monk, and cleric "died screamin' in the jaws of a demon." She strongly advises against "dancing with a goristro in the pale moonlight. Its teeth are hard as iron spikes, and its breath is—what's the word?—yikes." Her rhymes cause Dwern and several of the inn's patrons to roll their eyes, while Maggoth snickers idly. Although Rhapsody doesn't always speak or sing in rhyme, she rarely goes an entire conversation without some word play or turn of phrase.

If the characters make themselves comfortable or approach the bar, Rhapsody has some bar patrons help her to the floor so she can greet them properly. Read or paraphrase the following at this time:

> "Forgive my poor manners," says the woman as she's helped down from the bar. "My father's side, you know. He's also to

blame for my dismal dancing—ah, the pain of having two cleft feet. Seriously, though, my name is Rhapsody Nethervane, the proprietor of The Morningstar. Can I offer you a cold beverage, a cozy bed, or something warm instead? Perhaps a fine wine or pale ale? Flute or flagon, you pick the wagon. I also carry Stygian Draft. It's bitter swill and hard on the nose, but it'll help you forget your recent woes. Sorry for the rhyme—I do it all the time. Well, maybe not all the time."

Rhapsody offers a bed for 1 gp per 24-hour stay (and a key to the room), a glass of cool wine for 1 sp, and a mug of warm ale for 2 cp. Her charm and pleasant demeanor are free. She calls the inn's owner—a capricious githyanki knight named Suluk'ai—"his overlordship" or, more sarcastically, "the one that got away." She admires the githyanki as much as hates them and enjoys both telling them secrets and hiding things from them.

Creatures: Rhapsody is a flaxen-haired, 5-foot-tall tiefling with a bronze complexion that turns to scales on her shoulders and hips. The backs of her ears have small, bony ridges, and her cloven feet give her a gait overly thunderous for one so small. Although she can be a font of information about Tu'narath and its denizens, few clients are eager to trust her chaotic nature, as Rhapsody has no compunctions about sharing private information with the githyanki if it keeps them off her case. She is also willing to accept bribes. Her only loyalty is to herself; everyone else is "delightful, in a red-capped gnome sort of way."

The only time Rhapsody suffers a crisis of conscience is when Dwern browbeats her into doing the right thing ("words of wisdom from Dwern the Taciturn!"), but she is equally apt to heed Maggoth's corrupt, often ill-conceived advice ("Maggoth, you evil weevil!").

Despite their opposing alignments, both dwarves are willing to sacrifice their lives to defend the tiefling bard, and not because she bought them matching magic waraxes for their birthdays.

Dwern Splinteraxe: hp 125; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Maggoth Ashbeard: hp 68; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Rhapsody Nethervane: hp 49; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Tactics: If she is attacked, Rhapsody casts *haste*, *greater invisibility*, and *displacement* on herself, then uses *dimension door* to reach a safer location and casts cure spells on herself, if necessary. When sorely pressed, she uses *hold monster*, *shout*, and *Tasha's hideous laughter* to temper or incapacitate foes before fleeing to safety. Dwern draws forth his waraxe and wades in combat, while Maggoth maneuvers into a position where he can flank prey and deal sneak attack damage or make an opportunistic strike. Characters who get within 5 feet of Maggoth detect a strong brimstone odor emanating from the dwarf.

5B. KITCHEN

This spacious kitchen contains work tables, unlocked cabinets of dishware and food supplies, hanging pots, counters with drawers of utensils, a wooden wash basin, a fireplace, and a box filled with wood and kindling. A large soup kettle and smaller kettle hang from hooks in the hearth. A broom leans in the corner between the doors.

5C. DWERN'S ROOM

The door to this room is locked, and both Rhapsody and Dwern carry keys. A *continual flame* spell cast on a sconce near the window illuminates the chamber.

A large hearth dominates one wall of this tidy, handsomely appointed bedchamber. Silver furs cover a couch near the fireplace, and a plush chair and table rests nearby. Hanging on the walls are three tapestries depicting the platinum dragon Bahamut battling a score of red dragons, the dwarven stronghold of Erackinor on Solania (Celestia's fourth layer), and archons flitting around the gem-encrusted ziggurat of Yetsira on Jovar (Celestia's sixth layer). A circular embroidered rug covers half of the floor. In the middle of the rug sits a heavy wooden trunk with iron clasps and hinges.

Treasure: A good-quality lock shaped like a scowling dwarf visage (Open Lock DC 30) seals the lid of Dwern's trunk, which contains a suit of dwarf-sized masterwork half-plate, a *+1 spiked gauntlet*, several changes of clothes, and a sack holding 320 sp, 450 gp, and 5 gems (500 gp each).

5D. COMMODE

A curtain covers the doorway to this small room, which contains an open-seated chair with a chamber pot underneath. Some towels hang from iron hooks on the walls. The room holds nothing else.

5E. PILLARED HALL

Twenty slender pillars carved to resemble proud githyanki warriors support the 20-foot-high ceiling. The warriors clutch stone greatswords and stare intently at anyone passing through the middle of the room. Iron sconces lit by flickering *continual flame* spells illuminate the area. The doors leading to the guest rooms (area **5G**) are all locked.

5F. MAGGOTH'S ROOM

The door to this room is locked, and both Rhapsody and Maggoth carry keys. The room is dimly lit (see below) and smells of brimstone. The window's drapes are pulled.

A dark fireplace stretches along one wall. Near it, resting on the floor, is a scorched iron chest (see **Treasure** below). Next to the chest sits a padded chair covered with the scaly red hide of some infernal beast. A foul-smelling smoking pipe rests on the left arm of the chair.

Across from the fireplace rests Maggoth's "bed"—a stout, claw-footed iron tub filled with glowing coals. Although the coals are searing hot, Maggoth's resistance to fire protects him from the damage. A bellows fashioned from wood and flaps of dragon wing juts from the belly of the tub. Maggoth uses the bellows to "fire up" the coals before he relaxes.

Treasure: A masterfully crafted lock (Open Lock DC 40) seals the iron chest. The chest contains some ill-kept clothes, a pair of black leather boots and matching gloves, a ragged leather kit containing Maggoth's thieves' tools, a bundle of 24 tindertwigs, and an ebony box (50 gp) containing a stash of pipeweed. A secret compartment in the chest's lid (Search DC 25) contains a *potion of cure serious wounds*.

5G. DOWNSTAIRS GUEST ROOMS

Each room is locked (Open Lock DC 25) and contains a single bed, a wooden dresser with three drawers, and a tall wardrobe. Rhapsody rents a room for 1 gp per 24-hour stay. Although visitors to the Astral Plane do not require rest, the beds are provided for relaxation.

5H. GUESTS' ENTRANCE

Guests who do not wish to enter the establishment through the common room (area **5A**) can use the back door instead. The door is locked (Open Lock DC 30), but any of the guest keys can unlock it. The area is lit by the silvery void, as seen through the windows that follow the steps up.

5I. UPPER HALL

This hall is lit by flickering *continual flame* spells cast upon iron sconces mounted to the walls at 20-foot intervals. A crimson carpet stretches the length of the corridor, stopping just short of the balcony overlooking the common room (area **5A**). Chatter from the common room echoes down the hall.

5J. UPSTAIRS GUEST ROOMS

Each room is locked (Open Lock DC 25) and contains a pair of beds, two matching wooden dressers (with three drawers apiece), a small writing desk, and a tall wardrobe with a mirror mounted on the inside of the door. Although visitors to the Astral Plane do not require rest, the beds are provided for relaxation. Each room costs 1 gp to rent per 24-hour period, or one can rent an entire room for double the price.

5K. BELVELIOS'S SUITE

Belvelios, an ogre mage merchant who uses *polymorph* to appear human, claims this room. The average lock on the door has been replaced with three amazing-quality locks (Open Lock DC 40). A *knock* spell disables two of the regular locks, but the third lock remains secure.

The chamber's furnishings include a handsome roll-top writing desk, a table with three matching chairs, a mirror in a standing wooden frame, and a mechanically spun planar orrery fashioned from bits of metal and crystal (showing an accurate cosmology of the multiverse).

The dresser contains the mercane's spare clothing and worthless trinkets. The desk holds several pieces of parchment, some quills and jars of ink, and a few handwritten contracts with various recent arrivals to Tu'narath seeking magic items and other hard-to-find knick-knacks. The items are neither valuable nor incriminating.

Creatures: The merchant Belvelios finds Rhapsody amusing, but he knows better than to share secrets with a tiefling. The ogre mage resides at the Morningstar Inn because it is comfortable and because it sees its fair share of "planewalkers" and local gossip. Belvelios knows about the portal in area **5L** and tries to do business with anyone who comes through it. He knows a great deal about the Astral Plane and its denizens—information he shares free of charge. The earthquakes that rattle Tu'narath trouble him, but not deeply; like most residents, he sees them as natural occurrences and the "hazards of doing business on the Astral Plane."

Belvelios has connections among certain githyanki warlocks capable of brewing potions, scribing scrolls, forging rings, and crafting various other magic items (things he is generally unwilling to do himself). If the characters need a specific magic item, the Blue Merchant is their best chance of obtaining it legally in Tu'narath. However, Belvelios marks up all prices by 25% to cover "handling and delivery."

Belvelios the Blue Merchant (ogre mage): hp 43; *Monster Manual* 200.

Tactics: Belvelios is secretly allied with the Sha'sal Khou (see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" adventure for more information). He offers to share information about the githyanki Lich-Queen over a nice dinner (even though denizens on the Astral Plane don't feel hunger). He knows

that the Lich-Queen has enemies in the city and suggests the heroes intent on defeating the Lich-Queen forge a temporary alliance with Zetch'r'r, a githyanki warlord who has a stronghold in the city. The stronghold, called J'ryn'zalas (area **14**), is located in a district off-limits to nongithyanki.

Belvelios avoids combat using quickened *gaseous form* and *invisibility* spells.

Treasure: Belvelios's planar orrery stands 4 feet tall and weighs 170 pounds. A successful DC 25 Knowledge (the planes) check allows one to use the orrery to determine the relation or location of one plane with respect to another. For instance, one could use the orrery to determine whether two planes are coterminous, coexistent, or separate. A successful DC 35 Knowledge (the planes) check enables one to use the orrery to determine the physical, elemental, energy, alignment, or magic traits of a specific plane; the user must choose the type of trait and the plane before making the check. The orrery has hardness 5 and 30 hit points. It is mechanical (not magical) in nature and worth 5,000 gp intact.

5L. PORTAL ROOM

The door to this room is locked (Open Lock DC 30) but can be opened easily from the inside. The room contains a pair of comfortable beds, a modest nightstand, a pair of matching dressers, and a tall wardrobe with an oval mirror mounted on the inside of the door.

An invisible 3-foot-wide, 7-foot-tall extraplanar gate blends seamlessly with the wall located to the right of the door. Under the scrutiny of a *true seeing* spell, the portal appears as a faintly luminescent rectangular outline on the wall. The gate forms a one-way portal from the Material Plane; as the gate is one-way only, characters cannot use it to return to the Material Plane.

Rhapsody, her staff, and most of her regular patrons know about the portal.

6. KYN'DL STREET

Kyn'dl Street wends through a densely packed cluster of shops in the Merchant District, a few scant blocks from where the district converges with the rest of the githyanki city. Arched stone bridges connect some of the buildings' upper levels, 20 feet above street level. They are carved with leering, gargoylish faces and allow dwellers on the upper floors to move more quickly between buildings.

Arched Stone Bridge: 1 1/2 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 135 per 10-ft.-square section; break DC 40.

The merchants who operate shops on this street work whatever hours please them. To determine whether a given shop is open or closed, roll 1d4; on a roll of 1, the shop is closed.

The following keyed encounters refer to the map of Kyn'dl Street.

6A. YONRAUTH'S ACID EMPORIUM

A wrought-iron sign shaped like a coiled black dragon hangs over the door of this dank shop. Skillfully burned into the door itself are the words "Yonrauth's Acid Emporium," written in Draconic. An iron rack in front of the window displays several flasks of caustic compounds, each one properly labeled in Draconic as well. Several more flasks of acid rest on shelves about the store.

Creature: The proprietor, a human wizard named Yonrauth, sells acids of varying potency by the flask. Yonrauth seems on edge when asked to discuss his neighbors. He occasionally hears githyanki voices coming from the apartment adjacent to his (area **6K**). Since githyanki generally avoid living in the Merchant District, Yonrauth suspects that the ones lurking in the supposedly vacant apartment are spying on someone—although he knows not whom.

Yonrauth, Male Human Wiz 9: AL N; use **Table 4–22: NPC Wizard** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to generate statistics and equipment, if necessary. In addition to his gear, Yonrauth carries keys to the doors to his shop, storeroom (area **6I**), and apartment (area **6J**).

Treasure: Yonrauth has the several types of acid for sale, including the following:

Acid Type	Cost per Flask	Damage (Direct Hit/Splash)*
Ankheg Extract	10 gp	1d6/1
Digester Spray	50 gp	2d6/1d3
Blood of Dissolution	120 gp	3d6/1d6
Devilbrine	180 gp	4d6/2d6 (to chaotic creatures only)
Slaad Ichor	180 gp	4d6/2d6 (to lawful creatures only)
Wyrmdrool	200 gp	5d6/2d6

**A flask of acid deals splash damage to all creatures within 5 feet of where it lands.*

6B. ORLISPAR'S CANDLEWORKS

The window of this candle shop features an impressive display, from simple tapers to elaborate wax sculptures. Mounted to the door is an iron sconce holding a painted wooden candle with a *continual flame* spell cast on it. The front of the shop contains rows of shelves packed with can-

dles of varying shape and size. The back of the shop serves as a work area, where the candles are fashioned.

Creatures: Orlispar, an unscrupulous efreeti who secretly serves the Ch'r'ai as a spy and informant, runs this shop. (See "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" for more information on the Ch'r'ai.) Using his *polymorph* ability, he assumes the guise of a well-dressed, well-mannered gnome merchant. Although Orlispar enjoys making ordinary candles, his inventory includes magic candles that he buys from other merchants (including Belvelios the Blue Merchant) and sells at inflated prices (see **Treasure** below).

Orlispar (efreeti): hp 65; *Monster Manual* 115.

Tactics: Orlispar avoids conflicts with powerful foes, preferring to negotiate and lie his way out of a sticky situation. If the characters detect his true nature or alignment, he conducts himself in a calm, businesslike manner, suggesting that anyone not interested in buying candles should leave. He defends himself if attacked.

Treasure: Orlispar keeps his personal treasure somewhere on the Elemental Plane of Fire, as thieves are common nuisances and threats in Tu'narath's Merchant District. However, his shop contains eleven wax spell candles etched with magical script. When a spell candle is lit as its magical script is read (requiring a successful Decipher Script check with a DC equal to 10 + the spell's level), the candle releases a spell in much the same fashion as a scroll. Orlispar's small collection of spell candles contain the following spells: *antilife shell, augury, blasphemy, contact other plane, deathwatch, detect secret doors , dictum, fire shield, mass cure critical wounds, spell turning,* and *Tenser's transformation.*

6C. VILGHOON'S CONCOCTIONS

Welded iron shutters cover the windows of this establishment, and a dark-wood door fitted with an amazing-quality lock bars entry. The door is as resilient as iron, thanks to an alchemical treatment. Above the door's architrave, a gargoyle leers at passers-by.

When any living creature comes within 5 feet of the door, a *permanent magic mouth* cast on the gargoyle says, "If you've come seeking Vilghoon's Concoctions, knock twice. If you seek Vilghoon himself, knock three times. Otherwise, bugger off!" Knocking twice magically unlocks the door (as per a *knock* spell) and disables the **Trap** (see below). Knocking three times magically unlocks the door but does not disarm the **Trap**.

Locked, Magically Reinforced Wooden Door: 2 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 60; break DC 28; Open Lock DC 40.

Welded Iron Shutters: 1 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 30; break DC 28.

Trap: Fitted into the doorframe is a scythe. The blade slashes across the open doorway and back again, striking any creature that passes through the portal.

Scythe Trap: CR 2; mechanical; proximity trigger; automatic reset; +20 melee (2d4+8/×4, scythe); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 24.

Creature: Vilghoon, a githyanki assassin, deals in poisons. (Normal poisons administered on the Astral Plane don't take effect until the poisoned creature leaves the Astral Plane.) Vilghoon "retired" two years ago after a successful and lucrative career as a spy and contract killer. His name is known—and uttered with contempt—on more planes than he cares to count. For someone of such vile infamy, Tu'narath might be one of the few safe havens in the planar omniverse. Although rotten to the core, Vilghoon deals fairly with his customers and never sells them less than what they ask for. If questioned, he might share a local rumor or two, provided he gets something in return.

Vilghoon: hp 100; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Treasure: Vilghoon has 1d8 samples of all the poisons listed in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* as well as 1d4 samples of the following new poisons he has either concocted or discovered in his planar travels:

Poison	Type	Initial Damage	Secondary Damage	DC to Create	Price
Advespa venom	Injury DC 15	1d6 Str	1d6 Str	15	300 gp
Immoth ice venom	Injury DC 19	Paralysis 1d6+2 min.	1 Int*	20	4,200 gp
Mindsnatch	Injury DC 24	1d8 Int	2d8 Int	25	2,000 gp
Kelvezu claw extract	Contact DC 19	1d6 Con	1d6 Con	20	500 gp
Eviscerum	Contact DC 25	1d6 Int*	1d6 Int*, 1d6 Wis	25	4,500 gp
Mangler mist	Inhaled DC 22	3d6 Cha	1 Cha*	25	1,800 gp
Doom's grasp	Ingested DC 28	2d6 Con	1d6 Con*	25	5,600 gp

**Permanent ability drain.*

Development: Although the poison business is quite lucrative, Vilghoon can also be hired as an assassin. He agrees to kill someone for his standard fee. He needs 1d4

days to "research" the victim, and his standard fee is 1,000 pp × the victim's level, plus the victim's possessions.

6D. APARTMENT

The door to this octagonal abode is locked (Open Lock DC 30). The ill-kept, sparsely furnished apartment beyond belongs to the proprietor of The Blade's Edge (area **6E**). Searching the messy flat for treasure takes 20 minutes and yields nothing, as no valuable items are kept here.

6E. THE BLADE'S EDGE

The shop's sign is an ornamental greatsword bolted to an iron clasp just outside the door. The shop's name has been worked into both sides of the blade, written in Dwarven on one side and Draconic on the other.

Creatures: Rhodus Ironshod, a fierce dwarf with a gargoylish sneer, runs this shop. Rhodus fashions masterwork swords from a forge that fills fully half of the shop. If someone wishes to have their sword enchanted in a special way, Rhodus can have the proper enchantments cast for double the standard fees. (He knows a githyanki warlock or two who will perform the service, but their time isn't cheap.) The dwarf does not care to sell other types of weapons and promptly dismisses anyone who comes searching for them. He does not share rumors and rarely speaks of things other than swords.

Rhodus Ironshod, Male Dwarf Ftr 8: hp 72; AL LE; use **Table 4–16: NPC Fighter** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to generate statistics and equipment, if necessary. In addition to his gear, Rhodus carries a key to his apartment (area **6D**).

Treasure: Rhodus keeps his profits in a locked iron strongbox (hardness 10; hp 60; break DC 28; Open Lock 30) hidden under the ashes in his forge. The strongbox contains 150 pp and 580 gp. Racks along the walls hold an assortment of masterwork blades: 10 daggers, 8 longswords, 5 short swords, 4 bastard swords, 3 falchions, 2 scimitars, 2 greatswords, and a two-bladed sword.

6F. WISTUN'S WONDERS

A handsome wooden sign hangs above this building's ground floor entrance. The words "Wistun's Wonders" have been written on the sign in magically luminescent silver paint. Mounted on the inside of the door is a *stone of alarm* that warns the proprietor of visitors.

Wistun's Wonders consists of three rooms: the store proper, a small hexagonal bedroom, and a back workshop with a barred window looking out into the street. Every room is immaculate—a reflection of the owner's fastidiousness.

Creature: Although no friend to the githyanki, Wistun knows most of the trustworthy merchants in the Merchant District and occasionally creates wondrous magic items for them. The wizard doesn't keep medium or major wondrous items in stock, fearing theft. From time to time, he closes up shop and heads off on some grand adventure, which gives him the experience points needed to craft his works. He travels with a group of famous dwarven adventurers called the Thunderstones. As they specialize in hunting mind flayers, the Thunderstones and their allies are rarely troubled by the githyanki.

Wistun, Male Human Wiz 15: hp 59; AL LN; use **Table 4–22: NPC Wizard** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to generate statistics and equipment, if necessary. In addition to his normal gear, Wistun hides his spellbook in a *glove of storing* worn on his right hand.

Treasure: Wistun's store contains a few oddities and collectibles that the wizard is more than happy to sell. Roll 2d6 times on **Table 7–27: Minor Wondrous Items** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (page 247) to determine the specific "trinkets" Wistun keeps for display purposes.

Development: Although he has just begun work on a *cloak of etherealness* for one of his adventuring companions, Wistun gladly puts this aside if the PCs come to him with another project. Due to the scarcity of materials in Tu'narath, his prices for items are 20% above standard. However, he guarantees timely delivery.

With a successful DC 25 Diplomacy check, PCs can persuade Wistun to scry on someone within Tu'narath or perform some other service within the means of a 15th-level wizard.

6G. GERTEL'S TINDERBOX

The words "Gertel's Tinderbox" are etched into the door's stone architrave (in Common), and the door is not locked. Shelves line the walls of the store, and a barren desk sits under the barred, curtained window that looks out onto Kyn'dl Street. Dried blood stains the walls and floor near the counter. The store is otherwise bare.

The former proprietor of this establishment, Gertel Icebane, came to a bloody end after a githyanki patrol caught him dealing with an astrally projecting mind flayer. They used *dimension door* to enter the room and hacked the wizard to pieces, but the illithid escaped. Gertel's neighbor, Augthum (see area **6H**) heard the ruckus—and Gertel's pleas for mercy—through the wall. After killing Gertel, the githyanki removed or destroyed all of his prominently displayed magical wares.

Treasure: The githyanki did not search Gertel's store thoroughly. A successful DC 30 Search check reveals that the window's sill is the lid of a secret compartment holding four *potions of nondetection* in black crystal vials with silver stoppers (15 gp each for the vials).

6H. AUGTHUM'S ASTRAL AVIARY

A wooden sign hangs by the door, pronouncing the store's name in Draconic. On the door itself hangs a plaque that reads (in Common): "Deliver a message anywhere in the void for just 10 gold pieces! Inquire within. Mind flayers NOT welcome."

Creatures: A gravelly voice beckons characters who knock to enter. Inside, eight brass cages rest on tables, dangle from iron-wrought hooks and corbels, or simply levitate in midair. The cages hold eighty birds the size of small ravens. These denizens of the Astral Plane, called astral streakers, do not utter a peep most of the time, but they chirp and caw whenever strangers open the door or enter the shop. Weaving among the cages, feeding his feathered charges, is a gruff old gnome named Augthum.

Augthum provides a messenger service to the denizens of the Merchant District. Surprisingly intelligent, the astral streakers have adapted themselves to the strange environment of the Astral Plane and use their homing instinct to reach distant astral locations quickly. They can travel to any astral locale that they have been to before in one or two days. Initially, Augthum had to familiarize them to various locations by taking them there, but each generation of birds teaches the next generation the travel routes. Augthum rarely needs to make such trips, nowadays. A note or little bundle can be tied to an astral streaker's leg, or an astral streaker can be commanded to spy on a location and return. Although he doesn't advertise the use of birds as spies, Augthum knows that many of his regular clients use them for such. One of the astral streakers is actually Augthum's familiar (treat as a raven) and can usually be found perched on the gnome's shoulder.

Augthum keeps several sheafs of paper and a large spindle of twine atop a desk in one corner of his shop. For 10 gp, a customer can buy a piece of paper and a short length of twine, tie a written note to an astral streaker, and send it somewhere on the Astral Plane. Once it delivers the message (and a response, if one is provided), it returns to Augthum's shop.

Augthum does not like to take risks, and he would think twice (maybe even three times) before crossing a githyanki. If the PCs question him about his neighbors, he does not mind talking about Gertel's demise (see area **6G**), but that's about all. He speaks well of Orlispar (see area **6B**), but admits that his "fellow gnome" does not fear the githyanki as much as he perhaps should. Although far from naive, Augthum does not realize that Orlispar is actually an efreeti in disguise.

Augthum, Male Gnome Wiz 5: hp 19; AL LN; use **Table 4–22: NPC Wizard** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to generate statistics and equipment, if necessary.

6I. YONRAUTH'S STOREROOM

Cabinets and crates line the walls of this upstairs chamber. The cabinets hold empty flasks (for storing acids), and the crates (which are used for special deliveries) are all empty. A fully stocked alchemist's lab sits atop a table in the middle of the room.

The door leading to the bridge outside is locked (Open Lock DC 30), although it can be unlocked easily from inside the room. Yonrauth (see area **6A**) carries the key to this door.

6J. YONRAUTH'S APARTMENT

Both doors to this room are locked (Open Lock DC 30), and Yonrauth carries the key that opens both. The room contains a bed, a dresser, a writing desk, a chair, and a chest with *arcane lock* and *fire trap* spells cast on it.

Trap: The *fire trap* spell cast on the chest is more of a nuisance than a lethal threat. It detonates when someone other than Yonrauth opens the chest's lid.

Chest with *Fire Trap*: CR 3; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*fire trap*, 9th-level caster, 1d4+9 fire, DC 17 Reflex save half damage); Search DC 29; Disable Device DC 29.

Treasure: The chest contains Yonrauth's spellbook, a green crystal vial shaped like an illithid's head (20 gp) that holds a *potion of cure moderate wounds*, a masterwork dagger with a 100-gp gem set into its pommel, and a sack of 19 pp and 60 gp.

6K. SPIES

This apartment contains a table and four chairs. The furnishings are unremarkable.

Creatures: Four githyanki spies from J'ryn'zalas (area **14**) lurk here. Zetch'r'r has assigned them to watch over the githzerai safehouse (area **6U**).

Githyanki Spies (4): hp 36 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Tactics: These spies work for Zetch'r'r and the Sha'sal Khou (see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" for details). If the safehouse is threatened, they use quickened *dimension doors* to transport to area **6S**, join forces with the githyanki stationed there, and use *dimension door* again to enter the safehouse and defend both the githzerai and the portal hidden in area **6V**.

6L. MUZARC'S APARTMENT

The door to this apartment is locked (Open Lock DC 30). The disheveled room beyond contains a bed, dresser, wardrobe, and a few dozen candlesticks holding half-melted candles. Muzarc the elf wizard (see area **6Q**) keeps his spell components in various dresser drawers, pouches, and tunics scattered about the room. Those searching the room for treasure find little of interest, as Muzarc carries his valuables on his person.

6M. VACANT APARTMENTS

Each of these apartments is empty.

6N. KELHESTRA'S APARTMENT

Kelhestra the merchant (see area **6O**) lives here. The door to her apartment is locked (Open Lock DC 25), and the interior is furnished with plush carpets, pillows, and other creature comforts. The apartment contains little of value.

6O. PLANAR MUSINGS

A silver-filled engraving resembling a dimensional sextant adorns the door to this shop. Hanging above the door, a darkwood sign proclaims "Planar Musings—Reflections on the Omniverse." The shop itself contains shelves of trinkets and oddities that the proprietor has collected in her explorations, including chimes, candles, inks, musical instruments, clocks, bones, and maps.

Creature: The proprietor, Kelhestra, is a half-elf bard. She is willing to sell a map of a particular outer plane for 100 gp, although she cannot guarantee its authenticity. For 50 gp, she will share stories and musings about a particular plane she has visited or heard stories about. Again, the veracity of the information is not guaranteed. If a PCs come to her with a specific planes-related question or present some planar oddity, Kelhestra can use her bardic knowledge ability or a *legend lore* spell to help them find the answers they seek.

Kelhestra, Female Half-elf Brd 10: hp 47; AL NG; use **Table 4–13: NPC Bard** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to generate statistics and equipment, if necessary. In addition to her normal gear, Kelhestra carries a key to her apartment (area **6N**).

6P. UPSTAIRS FOYER

This empty room has two doors leading to adjacent shops (Planar Musings and Muzarc's Scriptorium). A stone bench juts beneath a window peering down into a back alley.

6Q. MUZARC'S SCRIPTORIUM

An ornate scroll-shaped signs hanging by the door of this shop reads "Muzarc's Scriptorium." Inside the shop, an elf wizard named Muzarc hunches over a desk in the middle of the room. When customers enter, he raises his head, grins, and says, "Come seeking a scroll, have ye? Be my guest—look around! If ye can't find what ye need, I might have something tucked away on another plane that'll serve ye."

The walls are lined with wooden cubbyholes, some empty and others containing furled scrolls. Muzarc's claims to deal mostly in arcane scrolls, many of which he scribes himself (at the minimum level necessary to cast the spell). However, for a slightly inflated fee (10% more than the standard price), he can secure a divine scroll and deliver it within 1d4 days. Characters searching for a

particular arcane spell have a base 50% chance of finding one copy here, minus 10% per level of the spell. He does not carry (and cannot cast) spells higher than 4th level.

Creatures: Muzarc is an elf wizard who deals exclusively in scrolls (they are cheap and relatively ease to mass-produce). He has no interest in providing other sorts of services or information.

Muzarc, Male Elf Wiz 8: hp 30; AL N; use **Table 4–22: NPC Wizard** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to generate statistics and equipment, if necessary. In addition to his normal gear, Muzarc carries a key to his apartment (area **6L**).

6R. THE EARNEST EYE

The door to this shop is set into a carved stone frame with an architrave sculpted into the likeness of a dragon clutching a crystal orb. A githyanki tir'su burned into the door spells the word "Kir'yal." Under the symbol, a gold plaque reads (in Draconic) "The Earnest Eye—Finder of missing friends and lost souls." A soft female voice beckons all who knock to enter.

The Earnest Eye is a shop where customers pay for scrying magic. Its proprietor, an old githyanki hr'a'cknir named Kir'yal, charges 140 gp per *scrying* spell (one-fifth the price of a scroll of *scrying*) or 455 gp for a *greater scrying* spell (one-fifth the price of a scroll of *greater scrying*). She can cast five *scrying* and two *greater scrying* spells in a 24-hour period. She requires payment up front, regardless of whether the desired spell succeeds, and hastens to point out that her spells work better when she has a likeness, picture, possession, garment, or piece of the creature or individual being scried.

A stone, claw-shaped pedestal rising from the middle of the floor holds a font of silvery liquid that Kir'yal uses as a scrying pool. Although she can be fussy and cantankerous, Kir'yal is always polite to customers. Her one rule is that she does not scry on other githyanki, and she makes this clear to every customer. She does not accept bribes, and threatening her only works with a successful DC 24 Intimidate check. Kir'yal lives in a large manse in the Merchant District and spends long hours in meditation when not tending to customers.

Creature: Kir'yal is unlike most githyanki. She is not evil, and her willingness to live and work in the Merchant District has earned her some derision among her kind. Although she has not advanced far as a wizard, as a hr'a'cknir she has atypical psionic abilities. Kir'yal is attuned to the Astral Plane and understands its nature. She also has a keen insight into the earthquakes besetting Tu'narath and believes that someone in the city is trying to awaken the dead god on which Tu'narath is built. Fearing that some ancient foe of the githyanki might be responsible for the tremors, she has tried using magic to learn more—to no avail. Kir'yal does not suspect the Lich-Queen and would never endanger herself by scrying on Vlaakith.

Kir'yal the Hr'a'cknir: hp 21; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

6S. SHYNYSTAR'S SPELLWARDS

A sign carved to resemble a pair of crossed staves alludes to the purpose of this shop. A note tacked to the door reads "Apologies, but I am away visiting acquaintances elsewhere. For the second-finest abjurations in Tu'narath, see the Blue Merchant at the Morningstar Inn. Shynystar Goldstaff."

The store's proprietor, Shynystar, specializes in abjurations and sells items to protect planewalkers from the natural and magical hazards of particular planes. However, he recently left Tu'narath to visit friends in Sigil, and his shop has been empty (but not unoccupied—see **Creatures** below) for some time.

The shop contains an ebony counter, several empty storage cabinets, a finely spun red carpet, and a writing desk loaded with paper, ink, and writing quills. Hanging on the wall behind the counter is a mirror in a green copper frame shaped like a gaping devil's face. Perched atop the counter is a small stuffed winged snake. There is little else of interest here.

Creatures: Three githyanki soldiers, two gish, and one warlock from J'ryn'zalas (area **14**) lurk here, waiting for the spies in area **6K** to alert them to trouble. They use their quickened *dimension door* abilities to reach area **6U** when they realize the githzerai safehouse is threatened.

Githyanki Soldiers (3): hp 34 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Githyanki Gish (2): hp 24 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Githyanki Warlock: hp 27; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics. The githyanki warlock carries a key to area **6T**.

6T. GUARDED APARTMENT

Both doors to this room are locked (Open Lock DC 30). The room contains a table and four chairs.

Creatures: Four githyanki soldiers stand guard in this room, rushing into area **6U** at the first sign of trouble. All four githyanki are loyal to Zetch'r'r, a warlord allied with the Sha'sal Khou (see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" and area **14** for more information).

Githyanki Soldiers (4): hp 34 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

6U. GITHZERAI SAFEHOUSE

A sign made of petrified bark hangs on the door to this shop. Etched into the sign in clumsy letters are the words "Magic Elixirs" (in Common). However, the shop has been closed for some time, its doors locked tight (Open Lock DC 30).

Creature: Eximil, a githzerai monk in league with the Sha'sal Khou, meditates quietly in the middle of this abandoned shop. Although not welcome in Tu'narath, he periodically comes to the city to deliver important messages to Zetch'r'r, using the portal in area **6V** to enter and leave the githyanki warlord's stronghold (area **14**) unnoticed. He also delivers messages and "merchandise" (magic items and other resources obtained by Zetch'r'r) to githzerai agents hidden in secret redoubts throughout the Astral Plane, reaching these destinations with the aid of an astral ship called the Voidstinger (see area **8**).

Like all members of the Sha'sal Khou, Eximil longs for the day when the githyanki and githzerai are reunited as a single people (see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" for details). He gives his life to keep those who do not share his beliefs from using the portal in area **6V** to violate Zetch'r'r's stronghold.

Eximil: hp 72; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Treasure: In addition to his equipment, Eximil carries a *helm of telepathy*—a gift from Zetch'r'r (obtained during a githyanki incursion on the Material Plane) for another Sha'sal Khou member operating outside the githyanki capital city.

Development: Eximil is preparing to leave Tu'narath to deliver the *helm of telepathy*. He is waiting for crewmembers of the Voidstinger to arrive and escort him safely back to the astral ship (see area **8**).

6V. HIDDEN PORTAL

The secret door leading to this room requires a successful DC 20 Search check to locate. If the PCs explore the room, read or paraphrase the following:

> A 10-foot-diameter gaping portal fills this otherwise empty room. A swirling maelstrom of violet-black smoke fills the oval gate.

The gaping portal is a two-way portal leading to J'ryn'zalas, the stronghold of a githyanki warlord named Zetch'r'r. A githzerai sorcerer working for the Sha'sal Khou created the portal with Zetch'r'r's permission, allowing githzerai to enter and leave J'ryn'zalas without having to navigate the capital city. Any creature or object that enters the portal is instantly transported to area **14C**.

7. DOCKING TOWERS

Nongithyanki visitors approaching Tu'narath in astral ships are permitted to dock here and nowhere else.

Several docking towers jut from this "hand" of the dead god. A typical tower resembles a 100-foot-tall iron scaffold with a wooden platform or iron berth near the top designed to support the weight of an astral ship. An iron berth has adjustable support struts that conform to the shape of a ship's hull, securing it in place, whereas a platform is simply a flat area on which a flat-bottomed ship can set down. Within the docking tower's superstructure, a levitating wooden platform allows crews to lower themselves and their cargoes safely to the island's surface, at a speed of 50 feet per round, simply by uttering the word "Down" in Common. Speaking the word "Up" causes the platform to rise at the same speed. A primitive crane affixed to the top of the tower enables crews to hoist heavy cargo into and out of a ship's hold.

Since gravity is directional, approaching astral ships must constantly adjust their orientation so that the deific husk of the dead god is always beneath them as they prepare to dock.

Roll 1d4 to determine the number of astral ships docked here at any given time. Unless its crew has reason to leave Tu'narath, the astral ship Voidstinger is among the vessels present (see area **8** below).

8. THE VOIDSTINGER

Although the vast majority of astral ships belong to the githyanki, other powerful or intrepid beings may command such vessels. The Voidstinger is a typical astral ship, created using the Craft Astral Ship feat (see sidebar) and driven by the power of thought. It sports a pair of extendable wings and landing gear resembling the talons of a bird of prey. Although ships like this are common on the Astral Plane, the Voidstinger and its crew are somewhat irregular.

Commanding the ship is Talazander Krulkrex, the former cohort of a sorcerer who was recently slain in astral form by an astral dreadnought. Krulkrex doesn't know which astral dreadnought killed his master, so he intends to kill them all. Krulkrex and his crew have killed two dreadnoughts so far, trading the carcasses to the Blue Merchant (see area **5K**) for money to replace lost crewmembers and repair damage to the ship. Between hunts, Krulkrex makes small cargo deliveries for Belvelios as well.

On this particular visit to Tu'narath, Krulkrex is not transporting cargo: The half-orc is preparing for another excursion into the silver void, restocking his supply of ballista bolts and securing replacement weapons for his crew. Krulkrex also plans to transport a githzerai monk named Eximil (see area **6U**) safely to a hidden Sha'sal Khou stronghold far from Tu'narath. Krulkrez does not fully trust his crew, as many of them are recent replacements.

Hence, he takes great pains to conceal the identity of his passenger, claiming Eximil is a human wizard studying Astral Plane phenomena.

Creatures: Captain Talazander Krulkrex is an intimidating figure whose stern glare demands obedience and whose resolve commands respect. He and seven crewmembers remain aboard the astral ship at all times. Eight more crewmembers, one of which is a cleric of St. Cuthbert, fill out the crew. These eight members periodically head into the city to secure supplies. The crew is trained to follow Krulkrex's orders.

Captain Talazander Krulkrex, Male Half-orc Ftr 12: hp 94; use **Table 4–16: NPC Fighter** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to generate Talazander's statistics and equipment, if necessary.

Geward Beltriss, Male Human Clr 10 (St. Cuthbert): hp 68; use **Table 4–14: NPC Cleric** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to generate Geward's statistics and equipment, if necessary.

Voidstinger Crewmembers, Male and Female Human War 5 (14): hp 27 each. Each crewmember wears studded leather armor (DC 13) and carries a longsword (+6 melee, 1d8+1 damage) and heavy crossbow (+5 ranged, 1d10 damage).

Tactics: Krelkrex requires that his crew not draw undue attention to themselves through their actions or words. However, they defend themselves if attacked, fleeing if the nearby flying fortresses take notice and send githyanki to investigate.

The following keyed encounters refer to the map of the Voidstinger. Note that the astral ship generates an artificial gravity plane that allows the crew to move on its decks normally.

8A. BOW

The ballista mounted on the bow can pivot to fire off the ship's port and starboard sides. A crate of four *+1 ballista bolts* and four nonmagical ballista bolts rests nearby. One

ASTRAL SHIPS

Building an astral ship requires the Craft Astral Ship feat. Flying the ship requires the pilot (who must have an Intelligence score of 1 or higher) to sit in a specially attuned chair called a helm. The helm allows the pilot to propel the ship by thought at a speed (in feet) equal to 10 times the pilot's Intelligence score. When the ship passes within a gravity well, such as that generated by a large chunk of drifting matter, it slows to a default speed of 50 feet. The astral ship can move at double speed and running speed. Piloting the ship is always considered a full-round action, and the pilot cannot engage in other activities while controlling the ship.

A pilot seated in the helm receives a 360-degree mental picture of the area around the ship, out to normal visibility range. The pilot feels as if he or she is flying directly over the ship and able to look in all directions at once.

The helm radiates strong transmutation magic under the scrutiny of *detect magic*. It serves as a conduit between the pilot and the vessel and is rooted to the ship. Destroying any part of it (the chair itself or the parts connecting it to the rest of the ship) renders the vessel powerless and inert. A helm has the same hardness as the rest of the astral ship and 3 times its hardness in hit points.

Rarely sold on the open market, astral ships can find their way into someone's hands by theft or other means. Excluding custom models, astral ships generally share the following statistics:

Astral Ship: CR —; Colossal Construct; HD 8d10 +1d10 per 10 feet of length; Init as the pilot – 4; Spd as the pilot (+30 ft. with psychic sails) in the Astral Plane, fly 50 ft. (poor) in a gravity well; AC varies (–8 size, +1 natural per HD); Atk as cleric of level equal to the ship's HD; Space/Reach 30 ft./10 ft. (or as ram); SA ram, mounted weapons; SQ construct, hardness; AL N/A; SV as commoner of level equal to the ship's HD, with no ability modifiers.

Construct: Like most constructs, astral ships are immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, disease, and similar effects. They are not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Hardness: An astral ship is usually composed of different materials but has an overall hardness of 5 to 10. An astral ship composed mainly of wood might have hardness 5, while an astral ship made of iron would have hardness 10. See the Attack an Object section of the *Player's Handbook* for more information on hardness.

Mounted Weapons: An astral ship can be fitted with heavy catapults, light catapults, and ballistas (see Siege Engines in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for statistics). An astral ship can have one mounted weapon for every 2 HD it possesses, although nonmilitary astral ships typically forego a full array of weapons in favor of having cargo space. A heavy catapult counts as two weapons for the purpose of determining how many weapons an astral ship can carry.

Ram (Ex): In any round in which no ship-mounted weapons are fired, an astral ship can ram a Huge or larger creature or object. If the prow of the astral ship is more than 50 feet away in a straight line from a target, it can move up to double its speed to deliver a ram attack using its regular attack bonus. The ram deals either bludgeoning or piercing damage, depending on the shape of its prow. The damage dealt equals 1d10 per point of the astral ship's hardness. For example, an astral ship with hardness 10 deals 10d10 points of damage with a successful ram attack, or triple damage on a critical hit (threat range 20).

crewmember is needed to fire and reload the ballista; reloading it requires two full-round actions.

8B. BRIDGE (EL 8)

This room contains a pair of winches for folding and unfolding the ship's wing-shaped psychic sails. The wings are usually extended during flight and pulled in before landing. The wing sails are designed to catch psychic winds and increase the ship's speed during flight; without the wings fully extended, the ship's astral speed slows by 30 feet.

A wooden ladder descends through a hatch in the floor, granting access to the lower deck.

8C. HELM

> A large, lumpy chair composed of hardened resin and contoured to fit a humanlike form rests at the back of the room. Ropy tendrils of hardened resin sprout from the chair's back and merge seamlessly with the walls of the ship.

One can control the speed and direction of the Voidstinger by sitting in the chair (called the helm) and focusing one's thoughts on flying the astral ship. Once in the chair, the pilot can see in any direction as though floating directly above the vessel. A tingling sensation causes the pilot's body to tremble slightly as he or she controls the ship. See the "Astral Ships" sidebar for more information about the astral ship and its helm.

8D. GUEST CABIN

A hammock hangs between two wooden walls near the door. Other furnishing in this cabin include a desk and matching chair by the aft window, a dresser with four drawers, and some hanging tapestries depicting various other planes of existence. To one side of the bed rests a heavy wooden trunk secured with a good lock (Open Lock DC 30).

Creature: When Captain Krulkrex is ready to leave Tu'narath, he sends Geward Beltriss and three crewmembers to fetch Eximil (see **6u**) and escort the githzerai monk safely to this cabin. Eximil remains sequestered in the cabin for the duration of his journey, pretending to be a wizened human wizard.

Eximil: hp 72; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Treasure: In addition to his equipment, Eximil carries a *helm of telepathy*—a gift from the githyanki warlord Zetch'r'r (obtained during a githyanki incursion on the Material Plane) for another Sha'sal Khou member operating outside the githyanki capital city.

8E. AFT

The two ballistas mounted to the ship's aftcastle can pivot to fire off the ship's port and starboard sides respectively. A crate of four *+1 ballista bolts* and six nonmagical ballista bolts rests between them. One crewmember is needed to fire and reload a ballista; reloading it requires two full-round actions.

A pair of wooden doors covers a 10-foot-square hatch leading to the cargo hold (area **8F**). The doors are not locked but quite heavy, requiring a DC 12 Strength check to pull open.

8F. CARGO HOLD

The Voidstinger's hold contains a few empty crates but no cargo. A few storage nets hang from hooks along the walls, between the portholes.

8G. CREW CABIN

This cabin contains seven pairs of hammocks stacked like bunkbeds. Two unlocked footlockers rest under each pair of hammocks.

Treasure: Each footlocker holds some personal effects and a pouch containing 2d10 pp and 5d20 gp.

8H. FIRST MATE'S CABIN

This cabin contains a hammock, a desk and chair, a locked wooden chest (Open Lock DC 25), and a small table. Atop the table rests a shrine dedicated to St. Cuthbert. On one wall hangs a painted wooden symbol of St. Cuthbert set with gems.

Treasure: The wooden symbol of St. Cuthbert on the wall is set with three large red spinels (250 gp each) and eight smaller red spinels (100 gp each). A small clay bowl inside the shrine serves as a brazier and holds a block of incense of meditation.

8I. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

The captain's cabin contains a hammock, a four-drawer dresser, a locked iron strongbox (Open Lock DC 40), a large wooden desk and chair, and a table covered with maps. The contents of the iron strongbox are described under **Treasure**, below.

The dresser holds Krulkrex's clothes and worthless personal effects. The strongbox contains the **Treasure**. PCs searching the desk find pieces of paper, writing quills, and jars of ink, but little else of interest. The maps depict various "islands" and strongholds adrift in the Astral Plane, including the deific husk upon which Tu'narath is built. Various locations in Tu'narath (such as The Morningstar Inn and the lich-queen's palace of Susurrus) are labeled in Common.

Creature: Unless he is summoned elsewhere, Captain Krulkrex can be found here, resting in his hammock or poring over his collection of maps. If awakened by shouts of alarm, he does not take the time to don his half-plate armor before investigating the disturbance; otherwise, he appears fully armored.

Tactics: Unyielding and fatalistic, Krulkrex defends his ship and crew to the end.

Treasure: The locked iron strongbox contains 80 pp in a leather pouch and four *potions of cure moderate wounds.*

9. MILITARY DISTRICTS

The githyanki culture revolves around war and conquest. From the moment they hatch, githyanki are assigned to military regiments. Deprived of any sense of family, the githyanki learn to value their weapons, armor, and combat prowess above all else. The city has several military districts where hundreds of githyanki regiments live and train. Each regiment has its own hierarchy of githwarriors, knights, warlocks, and gish. A typical district contains dozens of separate military compounds, with a supreme commander (a githyanki knight) presiding over each one. As the supreme commanders spend most of their time planning missions of conquest and conferring with one another about issues affecting the whole city, they rely on captains (kith'raks) to organize the units under their command. The captains in turn rely on sergeants (sarths) to train the common soldiers. Githyanki who demonstrate an affinity for magic receive additional training at the Citadel of the War Magi (area **11**) before rejoining their respective regiments. Githyanki who manifest unusual psionic abilities are sent to the Citadel of the Mind's Eye (area **12**) for mental training and enlightenment.

Creatures: A typical military compound includes several fortified and heavily guarded buildings. A typical military regiment consists of 200 githwarriors, 100 githyanki soldiers, 20 gish, 10 sarths, three kith'raks, and a supreme commander (knight). Githyanki use red dragons to reinforce their garrisons, and most military compounds include one or more buildings specifically designed to house them. A typical military regiment includes six juvenile red dragons and an adult red dragon (which is usually quartered with the supreme commander).

Nongithyanki are not welcome in the Military District and are arrested or killed on sight.

10. ASTRAL SHIPYARDS

The githyanki build their astral warships inside massive stone hangars resembling warehouses. Each hangar has a roof composed of strips of leather stitched to a retractable

NEW FEAT: CRAFT ASTRAL SHIP [ITEM CREATION]

You can create an astral ship—a vehicular construct designed exclusively for travel on the Astral Plane.

Prerequisite: Spellcaster level 15+.

Benefit: Provided you have the material resources, you can build an astral ship that harnesses the power of thought to ply the Astral Plane. The cost of building an astral ship includes the cost of the hull as well as all the materials and spell components that are consumed or become a permanent part of it.

The first task is to construct a facility (either a spacious workroom or warehouse)—at a cost of 2,000 gp. The second task is building the astral ship's body or hull. You can assemble the hull or hire someone else to do the job, but the builder must have at least 10 ranks in the Craft (shipmaking) skill.

The real work of creating an astral ship involves extended magic rituals that require two months to complete. The rituals allow you to "grow" the ship's helm—an organic chair that attunes the ship to the thoughts of the pilot. You must labor for 8 hours each day in the facility where the ship is being built. The helm can be shaped and configured according to your whim. Once fully grown, it can propel the ship through the Astral Plane at a speed (in feet) equal to 10 times the pilot's Intelligence score. A helm must be attached to a specific astral ship and cannot be removed and used to control another vessel. (Removing the helm destroys it and renders the ship immobile.) However, any creature with an Intelligence score can use the helm once it is installed.

When not conducting the rituals, you must rest and can perform no other activities except sleeping, eating, and talking. If you miss a day of rituals, the process fails and must begin anew. Money spent is lost, but XPs spent are not. The astral ship's hull can be reused, as can the facility.

Hull Cost: An astral ship's size (primarily its length) and hardness both factor into the cost of its hull.

The hull costs 25 gp per foot of length. If the astral ship's width or depth is half of its length or less, no additional hull costs for size apply. A hull with a width or depth greater than half the ship's length costs 25 gp per foot of added width or depth. Multiply the cost by the ship's hardness (usually a number between 5 and 10) to get the final cost of the ship's hull. For instance, a 120-foot-long astral ship hull with hardness 8 would cost 24,000 gp ($120 \times 25 \times 8$).

Helm Cost: An astral ship's helm is double the cost of the ship's hull. To create a helm, one must spend 1/25 of the helm's price in XP.

Psychic Sails Cost: Sails designed to catch the psychic winds of the Astral Plane may be added to the ship at a cost equal to half the hull cost. Psychic sails increase an astral ship's speed by 30 feet.

wooden framework that opens when a newly commissioned warship is ready for launch. A typical facility can handle two warship hulks at the same time, although rarely are these ships at the same stage of completion. The githyanki shipwrights (called mlar) and warlocks who build the astral ships (called var'ith'n) reside in smaller buildings near the hangars.

Creatures: A githyanki blackweave warlock (see POLYHEDRON *Magazine* #159) loyal to the Lich-Queen oversees the construction of each astral ship. The blackweave warlock oversees four warlock apprentices, who in turn command a team of 20 mlar, each of whom is a 7th-level githyanki expert with 10 ranks in the Craft (shipbuilding) skill. A squad of githyanki guards the hangar and protects the warlocks; this squad consists of 20 githyanki soldiers, 2 sarths, 1 kith'rak, and 3 trained hanathka'duths (half-red dragon megaraptors).

- **Githyanki Soldiers (20):** hp 34 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.
- **Githyanki Sarths (2):** hp 51 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.
- **Githyanki Kith'rak:** hp 102; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.
- **Githyanki Warlocks (4):** hp 27 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.
- **Blackweave Warlock:** hp 99; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.
- **Hanathka'duths (3):** hp 168 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Nongithyanki are not allowed near the astral shipyards and are arrested or killed on sight.

11. KRAN'I'TOC: CITADEL OF THE WAR MAGI

A 40-foot-tall stone wall broken by 60-foot-tall guard towers encloses Kran'i'toc, the Citadel of the War Magi. The citadel itself is a sprawling edifice—a collection of warlocks' towers and lecture halls joined by great pillared halls and arcades. It rests atop a stony knoll, looming over a conglomeration of residences occupied by hundreds of instructors and pupils.

Githyanki who demonstrate exceptional mastery of magic are removed from their military regiments and enrolled in Kran'i'toc, where they study spells and craft magic items. Those who choose the path of the gish combine their magical studies with the martial arts. At the end of their training, these young githyanki leave the citadel and return to their respective military regiments as practicing warlocks or gish. A handful of them stay behind as instructors and crafters of magic items, including the fabled githyanki *silver swords*.

Creatures: The towers surrounding Kran'i'toc bristle with ballistas and light catapults. A squad of githyanki fighters staffs each tower; each squad consists of 20 soldiers, 2 sarths, 1 kith'rak, and a juvenile red dragon.

The citadel itself contains scores of githyanki warlocks and gish, as well a dozen or more juvenile red dragon "watchdogs." Iron golems, magically bound planar allies, and *symbol* spells protect the citadel against intrusion. Nongithyanki found within the walls of the citadel are hunted down and killed on sight.

Treasure: Forges and workrooms within the citadel might hold small caches of magic items, but the real treasures of Kran'i'toc lie in scry-proof vaults hidden behind secret doors throughout the citadel. Herein the faculty hides its collection of potions, scrolls, wands, and wondrous items. Feel free to flesh out this trove as needed.

12. K'RADYSTAR: CITADEL OF THE MIND'S EYE

K'radystar, the Citadel of the Mind's Eye, is where githyanki come to study and harness the energies of the Astral Plane. Githyanki who manifest abnormal psionic abilities are sent here by their leaders to become hr'a'cknir—spiritual masters of the silver void. To become a hr'a'cknir, a githyanki must manifest unusual psionic powers (that is, psionic spell-like abilities atypical of the species). Githyanki society treats hr'a'cknir with equal measures of reverence and trepidation, and a hr'a'cknir who chooses not to return to his or her military regiment is free to pursue a different path without judgment or punishment.

The citadel proper resembles nothing so much as a cluster of square towers and hollow, rectangular monoliths fused into one complete structure. Within its stone walls, elderly hr'a'cknir teach young upstarts how to capture and redirect astral energies with their minds, allowing them to hone their peculiar psionic abilities. Blocks of residences fan out from the citadel, and a 40-foot-tall stone wall broken by 60-foot-tall towers surrounds this district.

Creatures: Hr'a'cknir have statistics similar to githyanki warlocks and gish. However, they possess different (or additional) psionic abilities. For example, a hr'a'cknir might have *augury* instead of *dimension door,* allowing her to channel astral energies to predict the future in much the same fashion a cleric uses divine energy to cast the *augury* spell. Each hr'a'cknir's abilities are unique and not necessarily a reflection of level.

The towers surrounding K'radystar bristle with ballistas and light catapults. A squad of githyanki fighters occupies

each tower; each squad consists of 20 githyanki soldiers, 2 sarths, a kith'rak, and a juvenile red dragon.

13. THE WILL OF GITH

The Lich-Queen bestows the title of Commissar to a supreme commander (knight) of exceptional cruelty, loyalty, and martial prowess. The Commissar personifies the law in Tu'narath, for he carries the burden of destroying those who bring harm to its citizens and all who oppose the Lich-Queen's dictum. The Commissar's responsibilities include capturing and executing lawbreakers and overseeing the city watch.

Commissar Yev'dakai rules the city from a stronghold called The Will of Gith. Loyal servants of the Lich-Queen known as the Ch'r'ai inform Commissar Yev'dakai of Vlaakith's wishes and insure that he fulfills his duties. Mivim, the member of the Ch'r'ai, resides at The Will of Gith and counsels Yev'dakai. Mivim answers to Xam'kras, the leader of the Ch'r'ai, who dwells in the Lich-Queen's palace of Susurrus (see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved for details on Susurrus).

The following encounters refer to the map of The Will of Gith.

13A. STRONGHOLD ENTRANCE

The ground floor entrance to this forlorn structure is carved to resemble a dragon's gaping maw. Stone doors inside the fanged maw defy entry to the building.

Bas-reliefs depicting honored githyanki warriors decorate the walls of the 20-foot-high chamber beyond the entrance, and caryatids representing the legendary Gith stand on either side of the archway leading to area **13B**. *Continual flame* spells illuminate the chamber.

Murder holes in the ceiling allow guards in area **13E** to rain arrows upon intruders (see **Development**, below).

Creatures: Four male duthka'gith fighters—half-red dragon githyanki—guard this entrance chamber. Two flank the entrance, and two more flank the archway leading to area **13B**.

Duthka'gith Guards (4): hp 70 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Tactics: The duthka'gith guards rely on sheer brawn to overwhelm their opponents.

Development: A battle here brings reinforcements from area **13B**, which arrive after 1 round. It also triggers a hail of arrows from the guards in area **13E**, who monitor the chamber through murder holes in the ceiling; the murder holes afford them nine-tenths cover.

13B. HALL OF PUNISHMENT

Great pillars carved with sneering githyanki faces support the ceiling of this 20-foot-high chamber. Torches set into sconces along the outer walls illuminate five square pits in the floor. Crisscrossing iron bars jut from the walls of each pit, just below floor level, effectively sealing them. From the floor near each pit rise two iron capstans, while above each pit dangle four sets of chains ending in shackles.

Two lifeless yet animate humanoid corpses grip each capstan, but they are the least of the chamber's horrors. Five human prisoners in shredded clothes dangle above the pits, their wrists caught in the iron-wrought grip of the shackles. They tremble helplessly at whatever fate awaits them in the pits below.

Although Commissar Yev'dakai enjoys executing criminals, individuals arrested for minor infractions and individuals unworthy of the Commissar's attention are consigned here—as examples of what happens to those who challenge the laws of Tu'narath.

The torches along the outer walls are actually *continual flame* spells cast on iron sconces.

The 10-foot-square pits descend 5 feet before opening into the unlit cavern below (area **13L**). The crisscrossing iron bars that cover the mouths of the pits can be extended or retracted by turning the nearby iron capstans—a feat requiring a successful DC 15 Strength check. As many as four individuals can attempt to turn a capstan at the same time.

The masterwork shackles binding the prisoners can be opened with a knock spell or successful Open Lock check, or they can be smashed open.

Iron Shackles: 1/3 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 10; break DC 28; Open Lock DC 30.

Iron Chain: 1/2 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 15; break DC 30.

Creatures: Three chain devils (kytons) and a bone devil (osyluth) named Tersicryl torment prisoners condemned to painful death in this hall. The kytons command the chains that bind the prisoners and can increase the chains' length by as much as 15 feet, effectively dropping the prisoners into the pits (whereupon they are quickly devoured by the creatures in area **13L**). The osyluth interrogates the prisoners, as well as animates and controls the zombies that operate the capstans. All of these devils serve Commissar Yev'dakai and help to defend the stronghold.

Two githyanki or githzerai zombies operate each of the chamber's ten capstans. They remain at their posts until the osyluth commands them otherwise. All of the zombies are

animated githzerai and mind flayer corpses that pose little threat to high-level PCs.

Eight githyanki soldiers keep watch over the devils and their prisoners. They stand in the corners of the room and respond quickly to trouble in other areas of the stronghold.

The five prisoners are evil acolytes of Hextor who failed to protect a githyanki egg hatchery on the Material Plane. Near death, they have nothing left to do but contemplate their failure and their fate. If set free, they guard their identities as best they can until afforded a chance to escape with their lives.

Tersicryl (bone devil): hp 95; *Monster Manual* 52.

Chain Devils (kytons) (3): hp 52 each; *Monster Manual* 53.

Githyanki Soldiers (8): hp 34 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Gith Zombies (20): CR 1/2; Medium undead (extraplanar); HD 2d12+3; hp 16 each; Init +0; Spd 20 ft. (can't run; base 30 ft.); AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (2d6+3/19–20, greatsword) or +3 melee (1d6+2, slam); SQ darkvision 60 ft., DR 5/slashing, single actions only, undead type; AL NE; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 11, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Feats: Toughness.

Acolytes of Hextor, Male and Female Human Clr3 (Hextor) (5): hp 23 each; use **Table 4–14: NPC Cleric** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to generate statistics for these NPCs, if necessary. They have no armor, weapons, magic items, or other gear.

13C. TOWER, GROUND FLOOR

A broad, stone staircase ascends to area **13D** on the second floor, while a stone spiral staircase descends to area **13K** of the dungeon level. The walls of this room are adorned with murals depicting flights of red dragons with githyanki riders. Between the murals are torch sconces made of illithid skulls; a *continual flame* burns in each one.

13D. UPSTAIRS FOYER

Murals on the wall of this foyer depict githyanki knights wielding *silver swords,* decapitating mind flayers and hacking their headless bodies to pieces. Between the painted murals are torch sconces made of illithid skulls; a *continual flame* burns in each one.

13E. GUARD ROOM

This room is featureless save for three rows of murder holes in the floor. Barred windows allow the silvery light of the Astral Plane to illuminate the chamber.

Creatures: Four duthka'giths stand guard here. They have their bows drawn and gaze down through the murder holes into area **13A**.

Duthka'gith Guards (4): hp 70 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Tactics: If intruders make it this far without alerting the entire stronghold, one of the duthka'gith guards uses a quickened *dimension door* to retreat to area **13I**, warning the Commissar of the surprise attack. The remaining guards try to incinerate intruders with their breath weapons before drawing their greatswords and leaping into melee.

Development: Sounds of combat here bring reinforcements from areas **13F** and **13H**. The guards in the chamber below (area **13A**) also hear the disturbance and make their way upstairs via areas **13C** and **13D**.

13F. CONFERENCE ROOM

A circular symbol is painted on the floor of this chamber. The symbol is a githyanki tir'su (see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" adventure for details) that spells the name "Gith." Centered above the tir'su is a round marble table with legs carved to resemble red dragons.

13G. WARLOCKS' ROOM

This room belongs to a pair of githyanki warlocks named Ravadur and Kr'ahlos. Both are members of the Ch'r'ai (see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" for details). The chamber contains a pair of desks with matching chairs, a shelf laden with miscellaneous spell components, and a pair of arcane locked chests containing the **Treasure**.

Treasure: Ravadur's chest contains githyanki body wrappings, a red robe sewn with semiprecious stones (worth 1,450 gp), a golden dragon mask painted red and set with malachite horns (worth 3,600 gp), and the warlock's spellbook (which contains all of Ravadur's prepared spells plus 2d6 additional 1st- through 3rd-level wizard spells).

Kr'ahlos's chest contains githyanki body wrappings, a masterwork dagger in a bejeweled scabbard (worth 500 gp), a golden goblet with a coiled dragon-shaped stem and rubies in the dragon's eyes (worth 4,500 gp), a *potion of cure moderate wounds,* and the warlock's spellbook (which contains all of Kr'ahlos's prepared spells plus 2d6 additional 1st- through 3rd-level wizard spells).

13H. HALL OF FINAL JUDGMENT

Silvery light pours into this sparsely furnished chamber through four great windows along one wall. A painted statue stands bathed in the astral luminescence: an imperious, 8-foot-tall githyanki in ornate golden armor, her greatsword poised threateningly as if to impale a fallen foe, her face a mask of ruthless contempt. Bas-reliefs on the walls depict a legacy of slaughter and conquest, showing fierce githyanki knights waging war against the vile illithids in stalactite-ridden caverns. Lovingly sculpted alabaster benches line the walls beneath these scenes of violence.

The Commissar of Tu'narath, Yev'dakai, passes final judgment on criminals in this chamber, where the statue of Gith can bear witness to his verdicts and executions. Indeed, the scornful glare of Gith is often the last thing a criminal sees before death. When not hearing the plaintive cries of the guilty or conferring with his advisors, the Commissar typically meditates in his private chamber (area **13J**).

13I. MIVIM'S QUARTERS

A brass table with legs shaped like curling tentacles dominates the room, and atop it rests an alabaster game board with a set of small, exquisitely sculpted obsidian figurines. Spaced around the walls are a dozen small niches containing black candles that cast blue flames. Between the niches hang tapestries depicting epic githyanki battles against mind flayers, githzerai, astral dreadnoughts, and other creatures.

This room is usually occupied (see **Creatures**, below). The alabaster game board and obsidian figurines are components of a strategy game similar to chess; the game board, wardrobe, and candles are discussed under **Treasure**.

Creatures: Mivim, a member of the Ch'r'ai (second only to Xam'kras), is here with two subordinate members of the Ch'r'ai—the warlocks Ravadur and Kr'ahlos. Mivim wears black body wrappings and a mask of the skull, giving him a lichlike appearance (although he's very much alive). He also clutches a gray-black rod made of astral driftmetal (his *rod of astral vengeance*).

Mivim's loyalty to Xam'kras, the leader of the Ch'r'ai, is absolute, but Mivim also awaits the day when the Lich-Queen consumes Xam'kras's soul (as she is wont to do) and makes him leader of the "revered ones." Mivim knows that Vlaakith is responsible for the earthquakes rocking Tu'narath but would never think to stand between her and her destiny.

In addition to his Ch'r'ai subordinates, Mivim relies on a trio of erinyes devils for counsel. The erinyes typically assume the forms of attractive female githyanki dressed in breathtakingly elaborate body wrappings. The erinyes attempt to seduce interlopers using their potent charm ability. If that fails, they try to entangle foes with their ropes before engaging in melee combat. If one erinyes falls in battle, each of the surviving erinyes makes one attempt to gate 1d4 barbazu (35% chance of success). If two erinyes fall, the third uses *greater teleport* to flee the stronghold and bring reinforcements to The Will of Gith.

Mivim the Hr'a'cknir: hp 60; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Githyanki Warlocks (2): hp 27; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Erinyes (3): hp 85 each; *Monster Manual* 54.

Treasure: The alabaster game board and obsidian game pieces are worth 300 gp for the set.

The wardrobe contains some ceremonial body wrappings (bandages), a collection of ornately embroidered silk robes, a pair of ornamental gold bracers shaped like howling demon faces (560 gp), a shrunken githzerai head hanging from a hook by some twine, and several jars of miscellaneous spell components. A secret compartment in the back of the wardrobe holds Mivim's spellbook and requires a successful DC 30 Search check to locate. See Mivim's statistics in the "Denizens of Tu'narath" section for the contents of his spellbook.

The twelve black candles are actually *coldfire candles* (see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" for details).

Development: A battle here attracts the attention of Commissar Yev'dakai (area **13J**), who uses a quickened *dimension door* to appear suddenly in the room.

13J. COMMISSAR'S ROOM

Two vivid murals adorn the walls of this chamber. The first depicts a lone githyanki knight astride a red dragon challenging an enormous, serpentine creature with horns, a single large eye, and two gnarled limbs ending in pincer-like claws. The second portrays a band of githyanki knights slicing through the silver cords of four astrally projecting mind flayers.

An ornate trunk fashioned from pieces of wood and astral driftmetal stands against one wall. The trunk is locked (Open Lock DC 40), and Commissar Yev'dakai carries the only key. Beside the trunk stands an iron weapon rack. The weapon rack holds a private collection of weapons taken from criminals and foes Yev'dakai has slain over the years. See **Treasure**, below, for the contents of the trunk and the rack.

Creatures: If the PCs enter this chamber without raising the alarm, they see a Commissar Yev'dakai in ornate full plate armor battling and parrying imaginary foes with

his silver sword. The Commissar's mount and companion, a juvenile red dragon named Torment, sleeps with one eye open nearby.

Commissar Yev'dakai seeks absolute order in Tu'narath. His finely wrought conception would not lie beyond the realm of reason were it not for the "unwanted interlopers" in the Merchant District. He has a low tolerance for "lesser species" and rarely shows leniency toward them. Yev'dakai oversees the duthka'gith soldiers who guard The Will of Gith and patrol the city. When not hounding criminals and enforcing the law, he confers on occasion with the supreme commanders of the various military groups in Tu'narath and shares his military strategems. Yev'dakai devotes his life to serving his queen, and he feels that Vlaakith herself speaks to him through her favored agents, the Ch'r'ai.

Yev'dakai, Male Githyanki Ftr 15: hp 152; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Torment, Juvenile Red Dragon: hp 168; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Tactics: Yev'dakai prefers to face foes in melee combat, swearing to put an end to their miserable lives "in the name of Vlaakith." Torment knows that Yev'dakai enjoys one-on-one challenges and always chooses a different opponent than the one Yev'dakai is fighting. If reduced to 25 hit points or fewer, Yev'dakai uses *plane shift* to escape, taking Torment with him if the opportunity arises. He then drinks his *potion of cure moderate wounds*.

Treasure: Yev'dakai's iron trunk contains several items: some folded clothes and black bedsheets, a gold diadem set with three black sapphires (5,150 gp), a bronze helmet shaped like a dragon's head with rubies for eyes (2,400 gp), a platinum collar (625 gp), four gold bracelets shaped like coiled serpents (200 gp each), a gold medal shaped like the sign of Vlaakith (180 gp), a *potion of bull's strength*, and a *potion of tongues*. The iron rack holds a *+1 dragon bane dwarven urgrosh*, a *+1 keen greataxe*, a *+2 heavy flail*, a *+1/+1 quarterstaff*, a *+1 holy mace of thundering*, a *+1 flaming scythe*, three pieces of a broken greatsword (two blade shards and a hilt set with an amethyst worth 1,000 gp), and a *+1 spiked chain*.

13K. ROUGH-HEWN CAVE

A spiral staircase, its newel carved to resemble coiling serpents, dominates this roughly hewn cave, from which juts a smaller side cave. A 10-foot-square, iron-wrought gate with a dangling padlock bars entry to a much larger cave filled with monstrous snarls and heavy footfalls.

The spiral stairs ascend to area **13C**. The gate is sealed with a large iron padlock (see below for statistics). PCs peering through the gate see area **13L** beyond.

Iron Padlock: 2 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 60; break DC 30; Open Lock DC 30.

Creatures: Two duthka'giths guard the room and watch the creature in area **13L**. One guard carries the iron key to the gate's padlock. The guards do not take damage from the occasional jets of flame shot through the gate by the denizens of area **13L**.

Duthka'gith Guards (2): hp 70 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

13L. PYROHYDRA LAIR

Light filters into this rough-hewn cave through five 10-foot-square iron grates in the 20-foot-high ceiling. Crushed bones and tatters of cloth lie strewn upon the floor. Two pyrohydras pace about the cave, waiting impatiently for their next meal to drop from one of the openings in the ceiling (see area **13B**).

12-Headed Pyrohydras (2): CR 13; hp 135 each; SA breath weapon; *Monster Manual* 157.

Breath Weapon (Su): Each head breathes a jet of fire 20 feet long, 10 feet high, and 10 feet wide. All heads breathe once every 1d4 rounds. Each jet deals 3d6 points of fire damage per head (DC 21 Reflex save for half).

14. J'RYN'ZALAS

J'ryn'zalas is one of many military fortresses in the city of Tu'narath. The supreme commander of J'ryn'zalas, a githyanki blackguard named Zetch'r'r, believes that Vlaakith the Lich-Queen has lost the vision set forth by Gith and is sacrificing her own people to fulfill her own mad schemes. She devours the life essences of her strongest defenders. She breeds half-dragon githyanki in a foolish attempt to improve upon perfection. No longer are the githyanki feared throughout the planes. Conquest has been usurped by complacency. All of this troubles Zetch'r'r deeply; however, his rhetoric has done little to turn other supreme commanders against Vlaakith.

Zetch'r'r seeks to reignite the githyanki passion for conquest and imagines leading a bold new regime to victory over his most hated enemies, the mind flayers. He also seeks to reunite the githyanki and githzerai as one people under his august rulership, for only together can the gith annihilate their ancient nemesis. To this end, he has joined forced with the Sha'sal Khou, a faction of allied githyanki and githzerai, and takes strides to protect its members.

The bastion of J'ryn'zalas is a three-story edifice adorned with sneering gargoyles and glowering bas-reliefs that scream or yell loudly when an invisible creature comes within 20 feet of the walls. The noise automatically alerts the bastion's denizens

Creatures: Zetch'r'r, his red dragon advisor and steed Vrax, four githyanki knights (Zetch'r'r's elite guards), and 20 gish occupy the fortress proper. Encircling the bastion are six smaller buildings that serve as barracks and training halls for the bulk of Zetch'r'r's troops: 200 1st-level githwarriors and 100 4th-level githyanki soldiers. Leading these githyanki soldiers are 20 sarths and 2 kith'raks. Stabled nearby are five juvenile red dragons (one for the bastion's kith'rak and the remainder for Zetch'r'r's knights).

Only Vrax, Zetch'r'r's knights, and the gish know that Zetch'r'r is allied with the Sha'sal Khou. Most of the other githyanki of J'ryn'zalas would be appalled and disgraced to learn that their supreme commander is allied with a faction that includes and tolerates githzerai members.

Zetch'r'r: hp 137; see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" adventure for complete statistics.

Vrax, Very Old Red Dragon: hp 465; *Monster Manual* 77.

Githyanki Knights (4): hp 119 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Githyanki Kith'raks (2): hp 102; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Githyanki Sarths (20): hp 51 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Githyanki Gish (10): hp 24 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Githyanki Soldiers (100): hp 34 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Githwarriors (200): hp 8 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Juvenile Red Dragons (5): hp 168 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Development: PCs might come to J'ryn'zalas looking for an ally against the Lich-Queen, or they might be captured and dragged here by githyanki loyal to Zetch'r'r. Zetch'r'r seeks worthy allies. Canny PCs might try to form an alliance with him; in this case, treat the githyanki warlord's initial attitude as hostile, but allow good roleplaying and successful Diplomacy checks to temper or quell his paranoia and distrust. If the PCs fail to change the warlord's attitude, one of Zetch'r'r's allies in the Sha'sal Khou might persuade the warlord to side with the PCs; however, in this case, Zetch'r'r secretly vows to slay them once they have outlived their usefulness.

The following encounters refer to the Bastion of J'ryn'zalas map. Ceilings throughout the stronghold are 20 feet high. Halls and rooms are unlit unless otherwise noted, as most githyanki rely on their darkvision to move about.

14A. ENTRANCE FOYER

> Eight identical githyanki stand at attention in this room, forming two columns. Each warrior is clad in black full plate and has a red gem embedded in his right eye socket. A black raven perches on each warrior's right shoulder.

Eight life-sized statues of Zetch'r'r (and his fiendish raven familiar) decorate this entrance foyer. Each one is made of painted black marble and is startlingly lifelike.

Toppling a statue requires a successful DC 20 Strength check. A set of double doors leads to the courtyard of Zetch'r'r's stronghold.

A 10-foot-wide hole in the middle of the ceiling quickly narrows, forming a funnel, before opening up into the floor of area **14O**. The red dragon Vrax lairs in the chamber above and can breathe a cone of fire down into this room if it detects intruders. The fire fills the 30-foot-square chamber and does not deal appreciable damage to the statues.

14B. ARMORY

The walls of this chamber are lined with iron weapon racks. The racks hold a variety of melee weapons, including at least one masterwork version of every simple, martial, and exotic melee weapon listed in the *Player's Handbook*. Zetch'r'r's troops use these weapons during training sessions.

14C. PORTAL TO KYN'DL STREET

> A 10-foot-diameter gaping portal fills this magically lit but otherwise empty room. A swirling maelstrom of violet-black smoke fills the oval gate.

Continual flame spells illuminate this room. The gaping portal is a two-way portal leading to area **6V**, a secret room hidden behind a githzerai safehouse on Kyn'dl Street, in the Merchant District. Any creature or object that enters the portal is instantly transported to area **6V**.

Creatures: Two hellcats guard the portal, attacking anyone who enters the room without githyanki escort. They are invisible, although their faintly glowing outlines are visible in darkened areas. They obey Zetch'r'r and his knights, but no one else. Their horrible, catlike shrieks are loud enough to be heard throughout J'ryn'zalas.

Hellcats (2): hp 60 each; *Monster Manual* 54.

14D. CRUCIFIX HALL

Four pillars carved to resemble serpents support the vaulted ceiling of this hall, which is where Zetch'r'r metes out discipline and meets with his kith'raks and gish. Hanging from the ceiling by iron chains is a large X-shaped crucifix made of black wood, with iron shackles bolted to the arms of the "X." The crucifix weighs 300 pounds, hangs 8 feet above the floor, and is suspended in such a way that anyone shackled to it faces the floor. Carved into the floor directly under the hanging crucifix is a bowl-shaped indentation used to collect blood.

Disobedient githyanki soldiers are sometimes shackled to the crucifix and left there for days, forced to endure the heckling of their fellow soldiers. Zetch'r'r and his knights also use the crucifix to interrogate and torture prisoners, slowing bleeding them to death once they're finished.

14E. SHRINE

This chamber houses a modest shrine to Vlaakith the Lich-Queen. An altar positioned against the far wall has a black crystal statuette of Vlaakith resting atop it, and niches carved into the walls hold black candles (see **Treasure**, below).

Zetch'r'r has not visited the shrine in ages and has no love for his undead queen. However, all warlords in Tu'narath are required to maintain a shrine dedicated to Vlaakith.

Treasure: The niches hold twelve unlit *coldfire candles* (see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" adventure for a description).

14F. DUNGEON

A heavy portcullis fashioned from gray astral driftmetal blocks the entrance to this dungeon. The winch for the portcullis is located in the hallway outside and requires a successful DC 14 Strength check to operate. Using the winch to lift the portcullis is a full-round action, but the portcullis can be dropped as a standard action by removing a catch on the winch. Bending the portcullis bars or lifting the portcullis without using the winch requires a successful DC 36 Strength check. As many as four Medium creatures (two inside and two outside) can attempt to lift the portcullis at the same time.

The room is empty and surrounded on all sides by 1-foot-thick mortared stone walls.

Astral Driftmetal Portcullis: 1-1/2 in. thick bars; hardness 12; hp 45 (per bar); break or lift DC 36.

14G. GUARDED HALL

A stone spiral staircase curls up to area **14H**. This hall is adorned with war banners depicting the J'ryn'zalas crest (a black raven perched on a stylized illithid skull). Three long wooden tables flanked by matching benches fill out the hall.

Creatures: Five gish stand guard here unless led elsewhere by Zetch'r'r's knights or calls of alarm.

Githyanki Gish (5): hp 24 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

14H. SPIRAL STAIRS

A stone spiral staircase leads down to area **14G**. This room is otherwise empty.

14I. GUARDED HALL

A stone spiral staircase curls up to area **14P**. This hall is otherwise bereft of furnishings.

Creatures: Five gish stand guard here unless led elsewhere by Zetch'r'r's knights or calls of alarm.

Githyanki Gish (5): hp 24 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

14J. GUEST QUARTERS

Zetch'r'r has set aside this room for honored guests (all other "guests" are shown to area **14F**). The room contains comfortable furnishings—a table with four matching chairs, two plush sofas, and some ornate statuary atop 4-foot-high stone pedestals (mostly busts of githyanki champions or handsomely crafted statuettes of devils and red dragons).

Creatures: One of the room's devilish statuettes is, in fact, an imp with a *statue* spell cast on it. While transformed into a statue, it can see and hear everything that happens in the room. Zetch'r'r uses the imp to spy on his guests, waiting for them to leave before asking it what it saw or overheard.

Imp: hp 13; *Monster Manual* 56.

14K. BALCONY

A 4-foot-tall stone parapet encloses each of these balconies overlooking the rest of the compound as well as the surrounding cityscape. A fall from a second-story balcony deals 2d6 points of damage, while a fall from the third-story balcony deals 4d6 points of damage.

14L. PRIVATE MEETING ROOM

This vaulted, circular chamber is illuminated by continual flame spells and has a tile mosaic on the floor depicting a fearsome red dragon. War banners hanging on the gray slate walls add to the décor. A well-hidden secret door (Search DC 25) leads to area **14N**.

The chamber is soundproof and has a *permanent Mordenkainen's private sanctum* spell cast on it. Zetch'r'r uses this room to confer in private with Vrax and his knights, as well as for secret meetings with high-ranking members of the Sha'sal Khou.

Development: Any meeting arranged between Zetch'r'r and the PCs occurs in this room. Vrax is also present for such meetings, usually in the *polymorphed* form of a human wizard.

14M. KNIGHTS' QUARTERS

Zetch'r'r's four trusted knights—Glyrr, I'a'kas, Lython, and V'kad—congregate here when not attending their warlord or leading excursions to other planes. Arranged in a semicircle facing the doors to area **14N** are four darkwood chairs, their high backs and armrests carved to resemble great black, bipedal ravens. More plush furnishings are arrayed in a corner nook overlooking the adjoining balcony (area **14K**).

Weapons of various sizes adorn the chamber's walls. Although practical, the weapons aren't of special quality and merely add to the décor.

14N. ZETCH'R'R'S QUARTERS

Zetch'r'r's room contains few furnishings, as the blackguard has little need for creature comforts. A five-sided table fills in the middle of the room near a 6-foot-tall, T-shaped iron stand used by Eyebite, the warlord's fiendish raven, as a perch. An imperious chair, made of vrock hide stretched over a sturdy wooden frame, faces the windows. War banners and tapestries hang from the walls; a banner depicting the J'ryn'zalas crest (a raven perched on a stylized illithid skull) conceals a secret door that leads to area **14L**. Locating the secret door requires a successful DC 25 Search check.

On either side of Zetch'r'r's demonic chair sits a locked and trapped iron trunk, which weighs 200 pounds when empty. Each lock can be picked with a successful DC 40 Open Lock check, and the traps are described under **Trap**, below. The contents of the trunks are described under **Treasure**.

Trap: A psychic poison strikes any creature other than Zetch'r'r or Vrax that touches either chest. Casting a *detect magic* spell reveals a moderate abjuration aura on each chest which can be *dispelled*, effectively removing the psychic poison. The poison traps have a caster level of 10th.

Psychic Poison Traps (2): CR 4; touch trigger (attached); no reset; psychic poison (nishita, DC 17 Will save resists, 1d6 Int/1d6 Int); Search DC —; Disable Device DC —.

Treasure: The treasure is contained in the two locked iron trunks and belongs to Zetch'r'r and Vrax.

Trunk #1 contains a bed of 28,500 gp, upon which rest the following items: an eye agate (5 gp), 3 rock crystals (30 gp each), 7 ambers (50 gp each), 2 chrysoberyls (110 gp each), 2 red garnets (130 gp each), a steel helm set with two matched moonstones (110 gp), a gold chain with an amber pendant (150 gp), a gold bracelet set with amber (200 gp), a pair of mithral-toed wyvernskin boots (400 gp), 2 silver armbands (600 gp each), a bronze basilisk statuette (800 gp), a bloodstone-studded rod (1,500 gp), an adamantine gauntlet set with rubies (1,700 gp), 3 leather-bound tomes describing the Nine Hells in excruciating detail (2,000 gp each), a *potion of cure serious wounds*, a *figurine of wondrous power* (*obsidian steed*), a *periapt of health*, and an arcane scroll (*cloudkill*, *greater teleport*, maximized *lightning bolt*, and *horrid wilting*).

Trunk #2 contains a bed of 24,200 gp, upon which rest the following items: 2 glass cubes each carved with the image of a githyanki's face (130 gp each), an amethyst bookend shaped like a mind flayer's head (300 gp), a black velvet cape fringed with giant eagle feathers (1,600 gp), a gold-plated hand mirror engraved with nymphs (1,800 gp), two ceremonial gold-plated breastplates set with tiny emeralds (2,500 gp each), a platinum neckband chased with entwined dragons with opalescent blue crystal beads for eyes (3,000 gp), a set of four religious treatises (4,000 gp for the set, which grants a +4 circumstance bonus on Knowledge [religion] checks), a *+1 animated light steel shield*, a *potion of bear's endurance*, a *wand of knock* (21 charges), a *ring of wizardry II*, a divine scroll (*find the path, harm*, and *transmute metal to wood*), and a *helm of opposite alignment*.

14O. CHEZ VRAX

Vraxanault, Zetch'r'r's red dragon ally and steed, claims this room. The chamber is just large enough to accommodate the dragon in his true form. Consequently, it holds no furnishings. A few cast-off scales litter the floor, however. The dragon keeps his treasure in Zetch'r'r's room (area **14N**).

A 5-foot-wide hole in the floor quickly widens, like a funnel, before opening up into the ceiling of area **14A**. Vrax can spy on the chamber below and use the hole in the floor to fill the chamber below with his fiery breath.

14P. SPIRAL STAIRS

A stone spiral staircase leads down to area **14I**. This room is otherwise empty.

14Q. WAR ROOM

This room has windows overlooking the rest of Zetch'r'r's military compound as well as the city of Tu'narath. In the middle of the room floats a 17-foot-long illusory projection (caster level 12th) of the dead god, the city built atop it, and the flying fortresses surrounding it. Zetch'r'r uses the projection to plan training exercises on the underside of the deific husk as well as organize his defenses in the unlikely event Tu'narath is attacked or the slightly more likely event that one of his fellow warlords turns against him.

15. NAVAL DOCKING TOWERS

The "crown" of the dead god has seven spokes that radiate outward from the lich-queen's palace (area **19**) and the necropolis surrounding it (area **17**). Several docking towers jut from each spoke, each one designed to support a githyanki astral ship. Githyanki stationed in nearby guard towers (area **16**) oversee the docking towers and watch for nongithyanki interlopers.

A typical tower resembles a 100-foot-tall iron scaffold with a wooden platform or iron berth near the top designed to support the weight of an astral ship. An iron berth has adjustable support struts that conform to the shape of a ship's hull, securing it in place, whereas a platform is simply a flat area on which a flat-bottomed ship can set down. Within the docking tower's superstructure, a levitating wooden platform allows crews to lower themselves and their cargoes safely to the island's surface, at a speed of 50 feet per round, simply by uttering the word "Down" in Githyanki. Speaking the word "Up" causes the platform to rise at the same speed. A primitive crane affixed to the top of the tower enables crews to hoist heavy cargo into and out of a ship's hold.

Since gravity is directional, approaching astral ships must constantly adjust their orientation so that the deific husk of the dead god is always beneath them as they prepare to dock.

At any given time, there are 1d3–1 githyanki astral ships docked at each of the dead god's seven spokes.

Development: Detailed descriptions and deckplans for various githyanki astral ships appear in *Dragon Magazine* #309.

16. GUARD TOWERS

Rising up from the spokes that form the dead god's "crown" are seven identical guard towers, each one four stories tall. Each tower is tapering cylinder of dark gray stone, with protruding balconies (used by landing or perching dragons) and four ornate silver horns jutting from the domed rooftop. The githyanki stationed in these towers protect the naval docks against attack.

Creatures: A githyanki kith'rak commands each tower, and the garrison consists of two sarths, 10 gish, and 20 githyanki soldiers. A juvenile red dragon serves as the kith'rak's steed.

In addition to their melee weapons, all githyanki stationed here carry composite longbows (each with a Strength bonus matching the wielder's) and quivers of 50 arrows.

Githyanki Kith'rak: hp 102; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics. The kith'rak also carries a composite longbow and 50 *+1 flaming arrows*.

Githyanki Sarths (2): hp 51 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics. Each sarth also carries a composite longbow and 50 *+1 arrows*.

Githyanki Gish (10): hp 24 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics. Each gish also carries a composite longbow and 50 arrows.

Githyanki Soldiers (20): hp 34 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics. Each soldier also carries a composite longbow and 50 arrows.

Juvenile Red Dragon: hp 168; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

The following encounter areas are keyed to the map of the Guard Tower. The ceilings within each tower are 20 feet high.

16A. ENTRANCE HALL

This spacious hall is empty. However, several arrow slits perforate the surrounding walls. Beyond the arrow slits lies a secret passage where githyanki soldiers and gish armed with bows and ranged attack spells can stand to attack intruders in this hall. The arrow slits provide the githyanki defenders with a improved cover (+8 cover bonus to AC and a +4 cover bonus on Reflex saves).

16B. ARROW SLITS

Three of the tower's four levels are lined with arrow slits, allowing githyanki soldiers and gish to rain arrows and spells upon attackers outside the tower. These empty areas contain the bulk of the tower's garrison.

16C. DRAGON PERCH

This balcony is used as a perch by visiting dragons. Most of the time, it is unoccupied. No railing or parapet encloses the balcony, and any creature that falls from this height takes 4d6 points of damage from the fall.

16D. HALL OF GITH

Two life-sized stone statues of Gith, liberator of the githyanki people, stand in alcoves that flank the doors leading to area **16E**. This hall is otherwise empty.

16E. KITH'RAK'S QUARTERS

The tower's captain, or kith'rak, can be found here when not defending the tower or the nearby naval docks against attack. As the chamber is unlit, githyanki must rely on darkvision to see. The room's furnishings include a modest desk with matching chair, a 9-foot-long triangular stone table with a tir'su (a circular sign spelling the word "Gith") carved into it, and a weapon rack lined with twelve masterwork greatswords and twelve masterwork javelins. Hanging on the far wall is a tapestry depicting Vlaakith the Lich-Queen, glowering from atop a throne made of illithid skulls and bones.

16F. BALCONY

A 4-foot-high stone parapet encloses this diamond-shaped balcony overlooking the naval docks. Two life-sized stone statues of Gith, the legendary githyanki champion, flank the entrance into the tower. Any creature that falls from the balcony takes 6d6 points of damage from the fall.

Creatures: When it is not patrolling the naval docks with its kith'rak rider, the juvenile red dragon lairs here. If it spots nongithyanki interlopers anywhere near the guard tower or nearby docking towers, it bellows loud enough to alert the githyanki in the guard tower, as well as any githyanki stationed aboard the astral ships docked nearby.

16G. DOME

This dome-shaped room, used as a gathering hall by the tower garrison, fills the entire fourth floor. A colorful painted mural covers the walls and roof, depicting an epic scene. The scene varies from tower to tower:

- A massive githyanki incursion on the Material Plane, showing red dragons with githyanki riders razing human cities and devouring its hapless denizens.
- The liberation of the githyanki people, showing githyanki warriors breaking free of their shackles and assaulting their mind flayer overlords.
- Githyanki knights armed with *silver swords*, storming a githzerai monastery on Limbo and using their swords to decapitate terrified githzerai monks.
- The formation of the githyanki pact with red dragons, showing Gith meeting with the great red dragon Ephelomon in Hell and the forging of the *scepter of Ephelomon*, a symbol of the eternal alliance. (See "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" for more information on the *scepter of Ephelomon*.)
- Githyanki knights laying claim to the Astral Plane by battling a dozen astral dreadnoughts.
- Githyanki and their dragon mounts sweeping across the deserts of Pharagos, a world on the Material Plane, flying through a magical maelstrom and slaying celestial guardians waiting on the other side.
- A coven of blackweave warlocks (powerful githyanki necromancers) raising an undead army comprised of illithids and their thralls, then sending the army toward a mind flayer fortress in the Underdark.

17. NECROPOLIS

Sinister, hulking mausoleums flank the Lich-Queen's palace on two sides, forming a vast necropolis. Within these ancient tombs lie the perfectly preserved mummies of ancient githyanki warriors and warlocks. Their ageless corpses are wrapped in funereal bandages and sealed in stone sarcophagi. Few precious belongings are interred

with them, for githyanki of that era bequeathed their weapons and other precious belongings to their most loyal subordinates and apprentices so the war against mind flayer tyranny could continue.

Creatures: Githyanki patrol the silent avenues of the necropolis. A patrol usually consists of ten githyanki soldiers and a sarth. In addition, a pair of githyanki warlocks astride hanathka'duths circle the necropolis at all hours, looking for signs of trouble from above. Anyone caught violating a tomb or desecrating the ancient dead is captured and put to death immediately.

Githyanki Soldiers (10): hp 34 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Githyanki Sarth: hp 51; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Githyanki Warlocks (2): hp 27 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Hanathka'duths (2): hp 168 each; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

18. DRAGON CAVES

The urban sprawl of Tu'narath covers less than half of the total surface area of the dead god's upper side. Beyond the city, the deific husk transforms into rocky hills and valleys carved with dozens of red dragon lairs (and even more caves dot the surface of the dead god's underside). These cave networks extend for hundreds of feet, joined together by tunnels that wend their way through the dead god like hollow arteries.

Creatures: The dead god plays host to scores of red dragons, all of whom revel in the fact that they do not age on the Astral Plane. The dragons revere Tiamat and honor the pact between her and the githyanki, serving the puny humanoids as mounts. The older dragons tend to live alone, while the younger ones congregate in small groups. If the PCs choose to explore one of the dragon caves, roll 1d6 to determine what lairs within: A roll of 1–2 indicates 2d4 juvenile red dragons, a roll of 3–4 indicates 1d2 adult red dragons and 1d4 juvenile red dragons, and a roll of 5–6 indicates a very old red dragon. Since time does not pass on the Astral Plane, the caves do not contain dragon eggs or wyrmlings.

Juvenile Red Dragon: hp 168; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Adult Red Dragon: hp 253; see "Denizens of Tu'narath" for complete statistics.

Very Old Red Dragon: hp 449; *Monster Manual* 77.

Treasure: The githyanki appease their dragon allies with treasure acquired during incursions into the Material Plane. Red dragons have triple standard treasure; to create an appropriately sized hoard, see **Treasure** on pages 51–56 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. The *Draconomicon*, releasing at the end of 2003, also includes several pre-built dragon hoards.

19. SUSURRUS: THE PALACE OF WHISPERS

The Lich-Queen's palace is described in "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" in *Dungeon* #100.

DENIZENS OF TU'NARATH

This section provides statistics for various creatures and NPCs encountered in Tu'narath. Generic githyanki statistics are presented first, followed by creature statistics for various githyanki mounts, and finally statistics for various "name" NPCs described in this Web enhancement.

GITHYANKI STATISTICS

Use the following statistics for githyanki encounters in Tu'narath.

Githwarrior, Githyanki Ftr 1: CR 2; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 1d10+3; hp 8; Init +2; Spd 20 ft. (base 30 ft.), fly 100 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (2d6+3/19–20, masterwork greatsword); SA *psionics*; SQ darkvision 60 ft., *psionics*, SR 6; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 15, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Craft (weaponsmithing) +2, Intimidate +1, Spot +2. *Feats:* Dodge, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*daze* (DC 9) and *mage hand*. Caster level 1st; save DC 9 + spell level.

Possessions: Breastplate, masterwork greatsword.

Githyanki Soldier, Githyanki Ftr 4: CR 5; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 4d10+3; hp 34; Init +2; Spd 20 ft. (base 30 ft.), fly 100 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +4; Grp +7; Atk/Full Atk +9 melee (2d6+7/19–20, *+1 greatsword*); SA *psionics*; SQ darkvision 60 ft., *psionics*, SR 9; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Craft +2, Intimidate +4, Spot +3. *Feats:* Dodge, Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur*, *daze* (DC 9), and *mage hand*. Caster level 4th; save DC 9 + spell level.

Possessions: +1 breastplate, +1 greatsword.

Githyanki Gish, Githyanki Ftr 2/Sor 2: CR 5; Medium Humanoid (extraplanar); HD 2d10+4 plus 2d4+4; hp 24; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 80 ft. (perfect) on the Astral

Plane; AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Atk/Full Atk +7 melee (2d6+3/19–20, masterwork greatsword); SA *psionics*, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., *psionics*, SR 9; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 16.

Skills: Climb +4, Concentration +4, Jump +5. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Dodge, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword).

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 13), and *mage hand*. Caster level 4th; save DC 13 + spell level.

Spells Known (6/5; save DC 13 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, flare, read magic, resistance, touch of fatigue;* 1st—*magic missile, shield.*

Possessions: +1 mithral shirt, Masterwork greatsword, *wand of mage armor* (5d10 charges).

Githyanki Sarth, Githyanki Ftr 6: CR 7; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 6d10+18; hp 51; Init +0; Spd 20 ft. (base 30 ft.), fly 130 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +6; Grp +9; Atk +11 melee (2d6+7/19–20, *+1 greatsword*); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (2d6+7/19–20, *+1 greatsword*); SA *psionics;* SQ darkvision 60 ft., *psionics*, SR 11; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills: Craft (weaponsmithing) +10, Intimidate +10, Ride +1, Spot +4. *Feats:* Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Leadership, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 11), *dimension door* (DC 15), and *mage hand*. Caster level 6th; save DC 11 + spell level.

Possessions: +1 full plate, +1 greatsword.

Githyanki Kith'rak, Githyanki Ftr 12: CR 13; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 12d10+36; hp 102; Init +2; Spd 20 ft. (base 30 ft.), fly 100 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +12; Grp +17; Atk +20 melee (1d8+12/19–20 plus 1d6 fire or electricity, *+1 flaming/+1 shock two-bladed sword*); Full Atk +20/+15/+10 melee (1d8+12/19–20 plus 1d6 fire or electricity, *+1 flaming/+1 shock two-bladed sword*) or +18/+18/+13/+8 melee (1d8+10/19–20 plus 1d6 fire or electricity, *+1 flaming/+1 shock two-bladed sword*); SA *psionics;* SQ darkvision 60 ft., *psionics*, SR 17; AL LE; SV Fort +11, Ref +6, Will +4; Str 20, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Jump +14, Ride +17, Tumble –2. *Feats:* Cleave, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (two-bladed sword), Great Cleave, Greater Weapon Focus (two-bladed sword), Greater Weapon Specialization (two-bladed sword), Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (two-bladed sword), Weapon Specialization (two-bladed sword).

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 10), *dimension door* (DC 14), *mage hand, telekinesis* (DC 15); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 17). Caster level 12th; save DC 10 + spell level.

Possessions: +2 full plate, +1 flaming/+1 shock two-bladed sword, +2 gauntlets of ogre power.

Githyanki Warlock, Githyanki Nec 6: CR 7; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 6d4+12; hp 27; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., fly 160 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +3; Grp +2; Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (1d4–1/19–20, masterwork dagger); SA *psionics*, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., *psionics*, SR 11; AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 8, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Concentration +11, Decipher Script +6, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (the planes) +12, Spellcraft +14. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Still Spell.

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 11), *dimension door* (DC 15), *mage hand*. Caster level 6th; save DC 10 + spell level.

Spells Prepared (5/5/5/4; save DC 13 + spell level): 0—*acid splash, detect magic, flare, read magic, touch of fatigue;* 1st—*expeditious retreat, mage armor, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield;* 2nd—*darkness, false life, scare, scorching ray, see invisibility;* 3rd—*dispel magic, haste, lightning bolt, ray of exhaustion.*

Spellbook: 0—all; 1st—*burning hands, cause fear, chill touch, expeditious retreat, mage armor, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield, true strike;* 2nd—*blur, darkness, false life, gust of wind, invisibility, scare, scorching ray, see invisibility, shatter;* 3rd—*dispel magic, haste, lightning bolt, magic circle against good, protection from energy, ray of exhaustion, vampiric touch.*

Possessions: Masterwork dagger, *pearl of power* (*1st-level spell*), *ring of protection +1,* spellbook.

Githyanki Knight, Githyanki Ftr 7/Blk 7: CR 15; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 14d10+42; hp 119; Init +0; Spd 20 ft. (base 30 ft.), fly 100 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +14; Grp +17; Atk +19 melee (2d6+7/19–20 plus 2d6 unholy, *+1 unholy silver sword*); Full Atk +19/+14/+9 melee (2d6+7/19–20 plus 2d6 unholy, *+1 unholy silver sword*); SA command undead 5/day, poison use, *psionics,* smite good 2/day, sneak attack +2d6; SQ aura of despair, dark blessing, darkvision 60 ft., *detect good, psionics,* SR 19; AL NE; SV Fort +15, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 16, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 15.

Skills: Concentration +10, Hide +0, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (the planes) +2, Ride +4. *Feats:* Cleave, Improved Sunder, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*silver sword*), Leadership, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-By Attack, Weapon Focus (*silver sword*), Weapon Specialization (*silver sword*).

Aura of Despair (Su): Enemies within 10 feet suffer a –2 morale penalty on all saving throws.

Command Undead (Su): Rebuke or command undead as a 5th-level evil cleric.

Dark Blessing (Su): The blackguard adds his Charisma modifier as a bonus on all saving throws.

***Detect Good* (Sp):** The blackguard can detect good, as the spell, at will.

Poison Use (Ex): Can use poison with no risk of poisoning self.

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 12), *dimension door* (DC 16), *mage hand, telekinesis* (DC 17); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 19). Caster level 14th; save DC 12 + spell level.

Smite Good (Su): Twice a day, the blackguard may attempt to smite good with one normal melee attack. He adds +2 to his attack roll and deals 7 extra points of damage. If the blackguard accidentally smites a creature that is not good, the smite has no effect but it is still used up for that day.

Possessions: +1 unholy silver sword, +3 full plate, ring of protection +1.

Blackweave Warlock, Githyanki Sor 6/Blackweave Warlock 10: CR 17; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 16d4+48; hp 99; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., fly 100 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +10; Grp +9; Atk +10 melee touch (2 negative levels, touch); Full Atk +10/+5 melee touch (2 negative levels, touch) or +13 ranged touch (by spell, ranged touch spell); SA death touch, energy drain, *psionics*, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., death ward, *psionics*, SR 21; AL NE; SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +12; Str 8, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 20.

Skills: Concentration +13, Intimidate +15, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Spellcraft +11. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Craft Astral Ship, Empower Spell, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (necromancy), Weapon Focus (touch).

Death Touch (Su): With a successful melee touch attack, rolls 20d6; if the total at least equals the target's current hit points, it dies. This is a death effect.

Death Ward (Su): Immune to negative energy and death attacks, as if constantly protected by a *death ward* spell.

Energy Drain (Su): Touch bestows 2 negative levels. The Fortitude save to remove the negative levels has a DC of 25.

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 15), *dimension door* (DC 19), *mage hand, telekinesis* (DC 20); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 22). Caster level 16th; save DC 15 + spell level.

Spells Known (6/11/9/9/8/6/2; base DC 15 + spell level, or 17 + spell level for Necromancy): 0—*acid splash, detect magic, detect poison, disrupt undead, ghost sound, mage hand, touch of fatigue;* 1st—*chill touch, disguise self, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, true strike;* 2nd—*blindness/deafness, false life, scorching ray, see invisibility, spectral hand;* 3rd—*haste, lightning bolt, ray of exhaustion, vampiric touch;* 4th—*bestow curse, contagion, enervation, fear;* 5th—*blight, cone of cold, hold monster, waves of fatigue;* 6th—*circle of death, eyebite.* Caster level for Necromancy spells is 18th, for other spells is 16th.

Possessions: Staff of necromancy, ring of protection +2, cloak of Charisma +2.

Duthka'gith Guard, Githyanki Duthka'gith Ftr 8 (9): CR 12; Medium Dragon (augmented humanoid, fire); HD 8d12+16; hp 93, 90, 82, 79, 75, 75, 70, 65, 62; Init +1; Spd 20 ft., fly 110 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +8/+3; Grp +13; Atk +15 melee (2d6+10/17–20, *+1 greatsword*) or +15 melee (1d6+5, bite) or +10 ranged (1d8+6/×3, *+1 composite longbow* [+5 Str]); Full Atk +15/+10 melee (2d6+10/17–20, *+1 greatsword*) and +11 melee (1d6+2, bite) or +13 melee (1d6+5, bite) and +11 melee (1d4+2, 2 claws) or +10/+5 ranged (1d8+6/×3, *+1 composite longbow* [+5 Str]); SA breath weapon (6d8 cone of fire; DC 12 Reflex half), *psionics*, smite good 1/day (+8 damage); SQ darkvision 60 ft., cold resistance 5, fire immunity, *psionics;* SR 13; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 20, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 13, Wis 8, Cha 12.

Skills: Craft (armorsmithing) +4, Craft (weaponsmithing) +4, Jump +9, Listen +4, Ride +5, Search +3, Spot +4. *Feats:* Alertness, Improved Critical (greatsword), Iron Will, Multiattack, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 11), *dimension door* (DC 15), *mage hand, telekinesis* (DC 16). Caster level 8th; save DC 11 + spell level.

Possessions: +1 driftmetal breastplate (see "The Lich-Queen's Beloved" in DUNGEON #100), *+1 greatsword, +1 composite longbow* (+5 Str), with 50 arrows, *potion of bull's strength, potion of bear's endurance, potion of haste.*

MOUNT STATISTICS

Use the following statistics for githyanki mounts.

Hanathka'duth, Half-red Dragon/Half-megaraptor: CR 8; Huge dragon (augmented animal); HD 8d10+51; hp 95; Init +2; Spd 60 ft., fly 120 ft. (average), fly 40 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 20 (–2 size, +2 Dex, +10 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +8; Grp +25; Atk +13 melee (2d8+9, talons); Full Atk +13 melee (2d8+9, talons) and +8 melee (1d4+4, 2 fore claws) and +8 melee (2d6+4, bite); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA breath weapon (6d8 cone of fire; DC 20 Reflex half); SQ darkvision 60 ft., immunities (fire, paralysis, sleep), low-light vision, scent; AL CE; SV Fort +12, Ref +8, Will +4; Str 29, Dex 15, Con 23, Int 4, Wis 15, Cha 12.

Skills: Hide +11, Jump +23, Listen +16, Spot +16, Survival +16. *Feats:* Run, Toughness, Track.

Juvenile Red Dragon: CR 10; Large dragon (fire); HD 16d12+64; hp 168; Init +0; Spd 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor), fly 140 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 24, touch 9, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +16; Grp +29; Atk +24 melee (2d6+9, bite); Full Atk +24 melee (2d6+9, bite) and +19 melee (1d8+4, 2 claws) and +19 melee (1d6+4, 2 wings) and +19 melee (1d8+13, tail slap); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA breath weapon, *locate object,* spells; SQ blindsense, immunities, keen senses, scent; AL CE; SV Fort +14, Ref +10, Will +12; Str 29, Dex 10, Con 19, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Skills: Concentration +23, Diplomacy +23, Intimidate +21, Knowledge (the planes) +21, Listen +21, Search +21, Sense Motive +21, Spot +21. *Feats:* Blind-Fight, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Wingover.

Blindsense (Ex): The dragon notices and locates creatures within a range of 40 feet. Opponents the dragon can't actually see still have 100% concealment against the dragon.

Breath Weapon (Su): 40-ft. cone; damage 8d10 fire; Reflex DC 22 half.

Fire Subtype (Ex): Immune to fire, takes 50% additional damage from cold.

Immunities (Ex): Immune to sleep and paralysis effects.

Keen Senses (Ex): A dragon sees four times as well a human in low-light conditions and twice as well in normal light. It also has darkvision with a range of 400 feet.

***Locate Object* (Sp):** The dragon can use this ability as the spell of the same name, four times per day.

Scent (Ex): Detect opponents within 30 feet. Exact location is not revealed, unless within 5 feet.

Spells Known (6/6; save DC 12 + spell level): 0—*detect magic, flare, light, read magic, touch of fatigue;* 1st—*mage armor, magic missile, shield.* Caster level 3rd.

Adult Red Dragon: CR 15; Huge dragon (fire); HD 22d12+110; hp 253; Init +4; Spd 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor), fly 160 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 29, touch 8, flat-footed 29; Base Atk +22; Grp +32; Atk +31 melee (2d8+11, bite); Full Atk +31 melee (2d8+11, bite) and +26 melee (2d6+5, 2 claws) and +26 melee (1d8+5, 2 wings) and +26

melee (2d6+16, tail slap); Space/Reach 15 ft./15 ft.; SA breath weapon, crush, frightful presence, *locate object,* spells; SQ blindsense, DR 5/magic, immunities (fire, paralysis, sleep), keen senses, scent, SR 21; AL CE; SV Fort +18, Ref +13, Will +17; Str 33, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 16, Wis 19, Cha 16.

Skills: Concentration +30, Diplomacy +28, Intimidate +28, Knowledge (the planes) +28, Listen +29, Search +28, Sense Motive +29, Spot +29. *Feats:* Blind-Fight, Cleave, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Initiative, Improved Overrun, Power Attack, Wingover.

Blindsense (Ex): The dragon notices and locates creatures within a range of 40 feet. Opponents the dragon can't actually see still have 100% concealment against the dragon.

Breath Weapon (Su): 50-ft. cone of fire; damage 12d10 fire; Reflex DC 26 half.

Fire Subtype (Ex): Immune to fire, takes 50% additional damage from cold.

Frightful Presence (Ex): When the dragon charges or attacks, it inspires terror in all creatures within 180 feet that have fewer Hit Dice or levels than it has. A potentially affected creature that succeeds at a DC 24 Will save remains immune to that dragon's frightful presence for one day. On a failure, creatures with 4 or fewer HD become panicked for 4d6 rounds and those with 5 or more HD become shaken for 4d6 rounds. Dragons ignore the frightful presence of other dragons.

Immunities (Ex): Immune to sleep and paralysis effects.

Keen Senses (Ex): A dragon sees four times as well a human in low-light conditions and twice as well in normal light. It also has darkvision with a range of 600 feet.

***Locate Object* (Sp):** The dragon can use this ability as the spell of the same name, six times per day.

Scent (Ex): Detect opponents within 30 feet. Exact location is not revealed, unless within 5 feet.

Spells Known (6/7/7/5; save DC 13 + spell level): 0—*acid splash, detect magic, flare, light, mage hand, read magic, touch of fatigue;* 1st—*burning hands, mage armor, magic missile, shield, sleep;* 2nd—*hold person, protection from energy, scorching ray;* 3rd—*fireball, haste*. Caster level 7th.

NPC STATISTICS

The following NPCs are encountered in various areas of Tu'narath. They are presented in alphabetical order.

Dwern Splinteraxe, Male Half-Celestial Dwarf Ftr 10: CR 12; Medium outsider (augmented humanoid, native); HD 10d10+60; hp 125; Init +0; Spd 20 ft., fly 20 ft. (average), fly 120 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 24, touch 10, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +10; Grp +17; Atk +21 melee (1d10+11/19–20/×3, +2 *dwarven waraxe*) or +17 melee (1d6+7, bite); Full Atk +21/+16 melee (1d10+11/19–20/×3, +2 *dwarven waraxe*) and +17 melee (1d6+7, bite) or +17 melee (1d6+7, bite) and +12 melee (1d4+3, 2 claws); SA smite evil 1/day, spell-like abilities; SQ DR 5/magic, darkvision 60 ft., daylight, dwarf traits, evasion (granted by ring), immunity to disease, outsider traits, resistance 10 (acid, cold, and electricity), SR 20; AL LG; SV Fort +13, Ref +3, Will +6; Str 24, Dex 11, Con 22, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 16.

Skills: Climb +14, Intimidate +16, Jump +14. *Feats:* Cleave, Great Cleave, Greater Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe), Improved Critical (dwarven waraxe), Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (dwarven waraxe), Weapon Specialization (dwarven waraxe).

Daylight (Su): Dwern can use *daylight* (as the spell) at will.

Smite Evil (Su): Once per day, Dwern can make a normal melee attack to deal 10 points of extra damage to an evil foe.

Spell-like Abilities: 3/day—*protection from evil* (DC 14); 1/day—*aid, bless, cure serious wounds* (DC 16), *detect evil, dispel evil* (DC 18), *holy smite* (DC 17), *neutralize poison* (DC 16), *remove disease* (DC 16). Caster level 10th; save DC 13 + spell level.

Possessions: +2 full plate, +1 heavy steel shield, +2 dwarven waraxe, gauntlets of ogre power, ring of evasion, key to chest in area **5C**.

Eximil, Male Githzerai Mnk 11: CR 12; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 11d8+11; hp 72; Init +4; Spd 60 ft., fly 80 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 22, touch 18, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +8; Grp +10; Atk +10 melee (1d10+2, unarmed strike) or +14 ranged (1d8+4/×3, masterwork composite longbow [+2 Str] with +2 *arrow*); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d10+2, unarmed strike) or +10/+10/+10/+5 melee (1d10+2, flurry of blows) or +17/+12 ranged (1d8+4/×3, composite longbow [+2 Str] with +2 *arrow*); SA

NEW ITEM

Rod of Astral Vengeance: Fashioned from gray-black astral driftmetal, this 13-inch-long rod can be wielded as a *+2 club.* Any creature damaged by the rod must succeed at a DC 15 Will save or succumb to a mind-affecting burst of psychic energy and be stunned for 1d4 rounds.

Moderate enchantment; CL 9th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Rod, *greater magic weapon,* can only be created on the Astral Plane; Price 26,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

ki strike (magic, lawful); SQ darkvision 60 ft., diamond body, improved evasion, *inertial armor*, leap of the clouds, *psionics*, purity of body, slow fall 50 ft., SR 16, still mind, wholeness of body (22 hp/day); AL LN; SV Fort +8, Ref +11, Will +9; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 11.

Skills: Balance +10, Climb +8, Escape Artist +6, Hide +9, Jump +10, Knowledge (the planes) +2, Listen +6, Move Silently +10, Tumble +12. *Feats:* Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Improved Disarm, Improved Trip, Improved Unarmed Strike, Mobility, Spring Attack, Stunning Fist.

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*daze* (save DC 10), *feather fall*, *shatter* (DC 12); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 17). Caster level 11th; save DC 10 + spell level.

***Inertial Armor* (Sp):** Githzerai can use psychic force to block an enemy's blows. This gives them a +4 armor bonus as long as they remain conscious.

Possessions: Masterwork composite longbow (+2 Str) with 20 *+2 arrows*, *belt of giant strength +4*, *amulet of health +2*, *potion of cure serious wounds*, gray cloak.

Kir'yal the Hr'a'cknir, Female Githyanki Wiz 14: CR 15; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 14d4–14; hp 21; Init +0; Spd 30 ft., fly 240 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +7; Grp +5; Atk +6 melee (1d4–1/19–20, *+1 dagger*); Full Atk +6/+1 melee (1d4–1/19–20, +1 dagger); SA *psionics*, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., *psionics*, SR 19; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +11; Str 7, Dex 11, Con 8, Int 24, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Skills: Concentration +19, Craft (bookbinding) +24, Craft (calligraphy) +24, Decipher Script +24, Knowledge (arcana) +24, Knowledge (history) +24, Knowledge (local) +24, Knowledge (the planes) +24, Spellcraft +26. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Eschew Materials, Extend Spell, Improved Counterspell, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Skill Focus (Concentration), Spell Mastery (*clairvoyance/clairaudience, eyebite, locate creature, nondetection, scrying, see invisibility, true seeing*).

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*augury, clairvoyance/clairaudience, detect thoughts* (DC 14), *mage hand, telekinesis* (DC 17); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 19). Caster level 14th; save DC 12 + spell level. Some of Kir'yal's psionic powers are not typically available to githyanki; this is the case with all githyanki hr'a'cknir.

Spells Prepared (4/6/6/6/5/4/4/3; save DC 17 + spell level): 0—*detect magic* ×2, *light, touch of fatigue*; 1st—*identify, magic missile* ×3, *ray of enfeeblement, true strike*; 2nd—*darkness*, extended *shield, scorching ray* ×2, *see invisibility* ×2; 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance* ×3, *lightning bolt, nondetection, tongues*; 4th—*confusion, locate creature, scrying* ×3; 5th—extended *scrying* ×2, *Mordenkainen's faithful hound, wall of force*; 6th—*analyze dweomer, greater dispel magic, eyebite, true seeing*; 7th—*greater scrying* ×2, *vision*.

Spellbook: 0—all; 1st—*identify, mage armor, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield, true strike, unseen servant*; 2nd—*darkness, detect thoughts, locate object, Melf's acid arrow, scorching ray, see invisibility*; 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance, lightning bolt, nondetection, protection from energy, tongues*; 4th—*arcane sight, confusion, detect scrying, locate creature, scrying, stoneskin*; 5th—*contact other plane, magic jar, Mordenkainen's faithful hound, wall of force*; 6th—*analyze dweomer, greater dispel magic, eyebite, legend lore, mass suggestion, true seeing*; 7th—*banishment, greater scrying, Mordenkainen's sword, vision*.

Possessions: +1 dagger, pearl of power (4th-level spell), amulet of natural armor +1, bracers of armor +3, ring of protection +2, headband of intellect +2, spellbooks.

Maggoth Ashbeard, Male Half-fiend Dwarf Rog 12: CR 15; Medium outsider (augmented humanoid, native); HD 12d6+24; hp 68; Init +9; Spd 20 ft., fly 20 ft. (average), fly 170 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 23, touch 15, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +9; Grp +12; Atk +14 melee (1d10+5/×3, *+2 dwarven waraxe*) or +15 ranged (1d8+4/×3, composite longbow [+3 Str] with *+1 arrow*); Full Atk +14/+9 melee (1d10+5/×3, *+2 dwarven waraxe*) or +15/+10 ranged (1d8+4/×3, composite longbow with *+1 arrow*); SA opportunist, smite good 1/day, sneak attack +6d6, spell-like abilities; SQ DR 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., dwarf traits, evasion, immunity to poison, improved uncanny dodge, resistance 10 (acid, cold, electricity, and fire), SR 22, trapfinding, trap sense +4; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +16, Will +6; Str 16, Dex 21, Con 14, Int 17, Wis 8, Cha 10.

Skills: Appraise +18, Balance +7, Disable Device +20, Escape Artist +20, Hide +25, Intimidate +15, Jump +5, Listen +14, Move Silently +25, Open Lock +20, Search +18, Spot +14, Tumble +20. *Feats:* Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Martial Weapon Proficiency (dwarven waraxe), Mobility, Spring Attack.

Smite Good (Su): Once per day, Maggoth can make a normal melee attack to deal 12 points of extra damage to a good foe.

Spell-like Abilities: 3/day—*darkness, poison* (DC 13); 1/day—*blasphemy* (DC 17), *contagion* (DC 13), *desecrate, unholy blight* (DC 14). Caster level 12th; save DC 10 + spell level.

Possessions: +3 shadow leather armor, +1 buckler, +2 dwarven waraxe, composite longbow (+3 Str) with 20 *+1 arrows*, *cloak of resistance +3*, *boots of elvenkind*, key to chest in area **5F**.

Mivim the Hr'a'cknir, Male Githyanki Nec 12: CR 13; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 12d4+36; hp 60; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 180 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +6; Grp +5; Atk +7 melee (1d6+1 plus stun, *rod of astral vengeance*) or +7 melee

touch (death, *mask of the skull*); Full Atk +7/+2 melee (1d6+1 plus stun, *rod of astral vengeance*) or +7 melee touch (death, *mask of the skull*); SA *psionics*, spells; SQ darkvision 60 ft., displacement (20% miss chance granted by body wrappings), *psionics*, SR 17; AL LE; SV Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +9; Str 9, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 18, Wis 13, Cha 13.

Skills: Concentration +18, Decipher Script +19, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (history) +19, Knowledge (the planes) +19, Spellcraft +21. *Feats:* Combat Casting, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Rod, Craft Wondrous Item, Great Fortitude, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy).

***Psionics* (Sp):** At will—*arcane sight, see invisibility*; 3/day—*sending*; 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 18), *Rary's telepathic bond*. Caster level 12th; save DC 11 + spell level. Some of Mivim's psionic powers are not typically available to githyanki; this is the case with all githyanki hr'a'cknir.

Spells Prepared (5/6/6/6/5/4/3; save DC 14 + spell level, DC 16 + spell level for necromancy spells): 0—*daze, detect poison, message, touch of fatigue* ×2; 1st—*chill touch, magic missile, protection from good, ray of enfeeblement* ×2, *shield*; 2nd—*blindness/deafness, darkness, false life, knock, spectral hand, touch of idiocy*; 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance, haste, hold person, ray of exhaustion, slow, vampiric touch*; 4th—*animate dead, bestow curse, dimensional anchor, enervation, stoneskin*; 5th—*break enchantment, dominate person, wall of force, waves of fatigue*; 6th—*chain lightning, circle of death, greater dispel magic*.

Mivim cannot cast conjuration spells.

Spellbook: 0—all except *acid splash*; 1st—*cause fear, chill touch, expeditious retreat, magic missile, protection from good, ray of enfeeblement, shield, shocking grasp*; 2nd—*arcane lock, blindness/deafness, command undead, darkness, daze monster, false life, knock, scare, spectral hand, touch of idiocy*; 3rd—*clairaudience/clairvoyance, fireball, greater magic weapon, haste, hold person, lightning bolt, magic circle against good, nondetection, protection from energy, ray of exhaustion, slow, vampiric touch*; 4th—*animate dead, bestow curse, contagion, crushing despair, dimensional anchor, enervation, fear, scrying, stoneskin, wall of fire*; 5th—*break enchantment, contact other plane, dominate person, hold monster, magic jar, passwall, telekinesis, wall of force, waves of fatigue*; 6th—*analyze dweomer, chain lightning, circle of death, create undead, disintegrate, eyebite, flesh to stone, greater dispel magic, Tenser's transformation*.

Possessions: Bracers of armor +6, mask of the skull, rod of astral vengeance (see the sidebar), *body wrappings of minor displacement* (treat as a *minor cloak of displacement*), *ring of protection +2*, spellbook.

Rhapsody Nethervane, Female Tiefling Brd 13: CR 14; Medium outsider (native); HD 13d6; hp 49; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., fly 130 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +9; Grp +9; Atk +10 melee (1d6+1/18–20, *+1 rapier*) or +11 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d6+1/18–20, *+1 rapier*) or +11 ranged (1d8/19–20, light crossbow); SA *darkness, fascinate*, spells, *suggestion*; SQ bardic music, bardic knowledge, countersong, inspire competence, inspire courage +2, inspire greatness, resistance 5 (cold, electricity, and fire), *song of freedom*; AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +10, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 15, Con 11, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 19.

Skills: Bluff +22, Concentration +16, Diplomacy +6, Disguise +22, Escape Artist +10, Gather Information +20, Hide +12, Intimidate +6, Sleight of Hand +20, Spellcraft +17. *Feats:* Dodge, Expertise, Improved Disarm, Mobility, Spring Attack.

***Darkness* (Sp):** Rhapsody can use *darkness* once per day (caster level 13th).

Spells Known (3/4/4/4/3; base save DC = 14 + spell level): 0—*dancing lights, detect magic, light, mage hand, prestidigitation, read magic*; 1st—*charm person, cure light wounds, mage armor, unseen servant*; 2nd—*cure moderate wounds, detect thoughts, see invisibility, Tasha's hideous laughter*; 3rd—*confusion, displacement, emotion, haste*; 4th—*dimension door, greater invisibility, hold monster, shout*.

Possessions: +1 rapier, light crossbow with 20 bolts, *necklace of sonic bursts* (*type IV*)*, *ioun stone* (*incandescent blue*), *wand of mirror image* (3rd level; 25 charges), *potion of alter self*, pouch containing 10 pp, iron keys to all locked doors in the Morningstar Inn, spare keys for the inn's guest rooms.

*As necklace of fireballs except it deals sonic damage.

Vilghoon, Male Githyanki Rog 6/Asn 10: CR 17; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 16d6+48; hp 100; Init +6; Spd 30 ft., fly 140 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 22, touch 15, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +11; Grp +12; Atk +20 melee (1d6+3/18–20 and wounding, *+2 wounding rapier*); Full Atk +20/+15/+10 melee (1d6+3/18–20 and wounding, *+2 wounding rapier*); SA death attack, poison use, *psionics*, sneak attack +8d6; SQ darkvision 60 ft., evasion, improved uncanny dodge, *psionics*, SR 21, trapfinding, trap sense +5; AL NE; SV Fort +10 (+15 against poison), Ref +20, Will +7; Str 12, Dex 22, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Balance +27, Climb +10, Disguise +18, Gather Information +8, Hide +32, Intimidate +11, Jump +3, Listen +9, Move Silently +32, Spot +9, Tumble +25. *Feats:* Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Stealthy, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier).

Spells Known (4/4/3/3; save DC 12 + spell level): 1st—*disguise self, jump, sleep, true strike*; 2nd—*alter self, cat's grace, illusory script, pass without trace*; 3rd—*deep slumber, deeper darkness,*

misdirection, nondetection; 4th—*clairaudience/clairvoyance, freedom of movement, greater invisibility, poison.*

Death Attack (Ex): After studying victim for 3 rounds, successful melee attack can paralyze or kill. Fortitude save (DC 22) negates.

Poison Use (Ex): Can use poison with no risk of poisoning self.

***Psionics* (Sp):** 3/day—*blur, daze* (DC 9), *dimension door* (DC 13), *mage hand, telekinesis* (DC 14); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 16). Caster level 16th; save DC 9 + spell level.

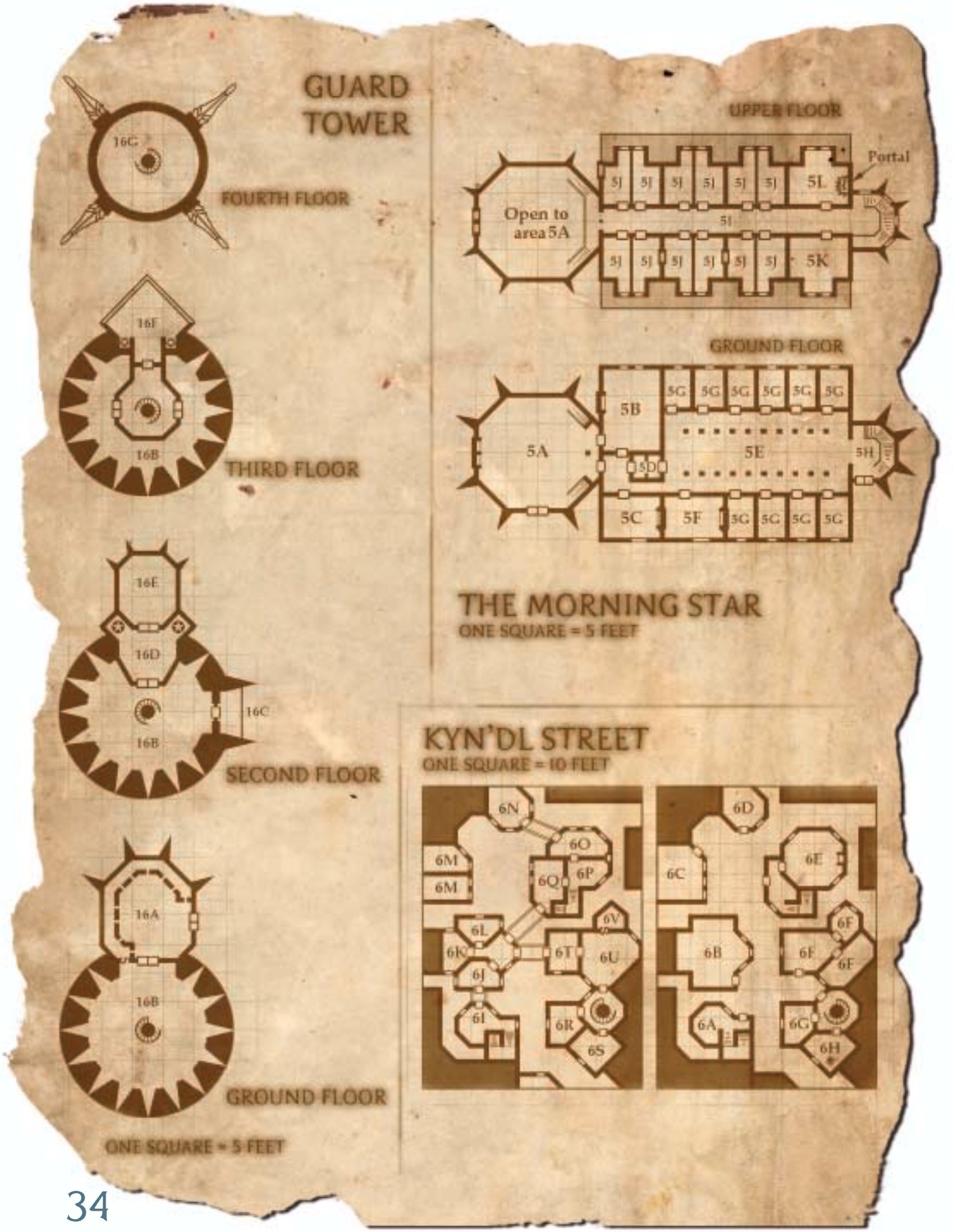
Possessions: +3 shadow studded leather, +2 rapier of wounding, dagger of venom, gloves of Dexterity +4, cloak of resistance +2, boots of elvenkind, amulet of proof against detection and location.

Yev'dakai (Commissar of Tu'narath), Male Githyanki Ftr 15: CR 16; Medium humanoid (extraplanar); HD 15d10+30; hp 152; Init +1; Spd 20 ft. (base 30 ft.), fly 110 ft. (perfect) on the Astral Plane; AC 22, touch 13, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +15; Grp +18; Atk +21 melee (2d6+8/17–20, *+2 silver sword*) or +17 ranged (1d8+4/×3 plus 2d6 unholy, *+1 unholy composite longbow* [*+3 Str*]) Full Atk +21/+16/+11 melee (2d6+8/17–20, *+2 silver sword*) or +17/+12/+7 ranged (1d8+4/×3 plus 2d6 unholy, *+1 unholy composite longbow* [*+3 Str*]) or +15/+15/+10/+5 ranged (1d8+4/×3 plus 2d6 unholy, *+1 unholy composite longbow* [*+3 Str*] with Rapid Shot); SA *psionics;* SQ darkvision 60 ft., *psionics,* SR 20; AL LE; SV Fort +11, Ref +6, Will +5; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 16.

Skills: Intimidate +21, Ride +19. *Feats:* Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*silver sword*), Great Cleave, Improved Critical (greatsword), Mounted Archery, Mounted Combat, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword).

***Psionics* (Sp):** At will—*daze* (DC 13), *mage hand;* 3/day—*blur, dimension door* (DC 17), *telekinesis* (DC 18); 1/day—*plane shift* (DC 20). Caster level 15th; save DC 13 + spell level.

Possessions: +2 breastplate of command, +2 silver sword, +1 unholy composite longbow (*+3 Str*) with 50 arrows, *amulet of natural armor +2, ring of protection +2.*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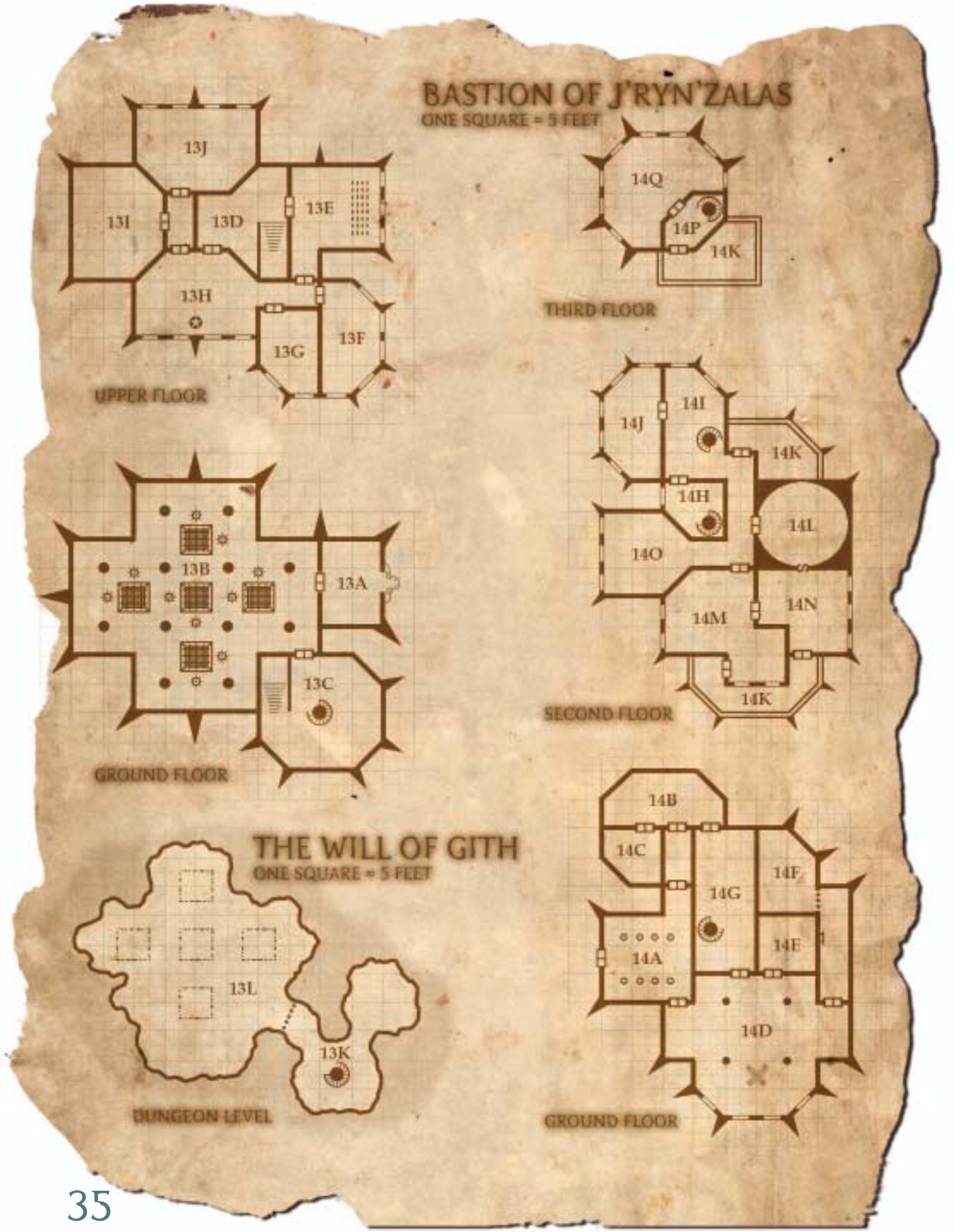
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